

NOV. 29, 2004

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TO FIGHT

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A STOLEN
ELECTION?

David Corn

THE FAITH
FACTOR

Barbara
Ehrenreich

AFTER ARAFAT
Graham Usher

CURING THE
UNION BLUES

Thomas
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ALMODÓVAR'S
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THE WORLD THE
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WILL BUSH GET BURNED?

NOW IT'S HIS WAR AND HIS ECONOMY



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EXCHANGE

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

Intervention & Its Discontents

Brooklyn, NY

■ Given that Anatol Lieven had six pages to discuss *The Fight Is for Democracy*, it's amazing how badly he informed *Nation* readers about its contents ["Liberal Hawk Down," Oct. 25]. Lieven chose to spend all that space attacking—nastily and unfairly—two of the book's contributors for their supposed sins of ignorance and extremism. Paul Berman and Michael Tomasky can defend themselves. But your readers have a right to know what else is in the anthology: essays on economic inequality, on globalization, on secularism, on critical thinking, on civic culture, on the humanitarian interventions of the 1990s. There is nothing "messianic" about these writings. They are, to use the current term, nuanced, and written by some of our best journalists and critics at a high literary and intellectual standard. All of this was lost on Lieven, who had another, narrower agenda than thinking about and responding to the anthology I edited. True, *The Fight Is for Democracy* criticizes some of the mental habits of the left. Many of them can be found in Lieven's review. But the book is unequivocally on the side of making America more democratic—more equal and more free—and of turning US foreign policy toward the same ends abroad. These used to be the aims of American liberals; for me they still are. But Lieven wants to drum the book's contributors out of the Democratic Party. Presumably, once the party is purified of anyone who challenges its least useful orthodoxies, victory will be within its grasp.

GEORGE PACKER

Brooklyn, NY

■ Exhaustive demonstrations of the errors in Lieven's interpretation of Baathism can be found at a scholarly blog about Arab political theory (beirut2bayside.blogspot.com) called Across the Bay and in a recent post by Lee Smith at *Slate*.

PAUL BERMAN

Washington, DC

■ If Anatol Lieven were merely reviewing *The Fight Is for Democracy*, I suppose I could see how he might think I'd supported the war, since I did not state explicitly in that volume my opposition. But since his "review" was excerpted from his book, and since authors of books should do a little more research than that, I'd think he might have read at least a couple of my prewar columns for the *American Prospect* online, where I made my opposition to the war—based chiefly on my utter distrust of the Bush Administration's motives and hegemonic plans—quite clear. Even in the essay in

question, I discussed at great length what I saw as the Administration's unstated aims regarding Iraq, as originally laid out in 1992, and I called for exactly the debate Lieven calls for, writing that "Democratic politicians have to have the courage to fight the Cheney-Wolfowitz argument head-on." I have a hard time seeing the ambiguity in that sentence.

But my views have been mischaracterized before (in *The Nation*, no less!) and will be again. That's life. The more serious problems with Lieven's essay are two. First: I'm well aware that a magazine does not necessarily endorse every opinion presented by every contributor to its pages. But does *The Nation* really feel proud about giving space and lending its esteemed imprimatur to the proposal that the Democratic Party should "purge" everyone who supported the war, or who disagrees with Lieven? (I should think a magazine of the left would be careful about that word.) I take it from Lieven's call for an ideological housecleaning that he admires the way Karl Rove and Tom DeLay run the Republican Party.

Second, I would ask *Nation* readers who are interested to reread Lieven's essay with the following question in mind: What is he for? He doesn't say. The whole point of my essay (and indeed of the book, if I may speak for George Packer, its editor) was to argue a liberal case for democratization—and the good things that tend to arise in its wake, like liberalized education systems and equality for women. Yes, the neo-conservatives have adopted some of that rhetoric. But so what? The fact that the neocons claim to support democratization scarcely means that progressives must reflexively oppose the notion that the United States should try—through more benign methods than the neocons', obviously—to promote ideals that I thought the left was supposed to embrace.

MICHAEL TOMASKY

Washington, DC

■ Since *The Nation* doesn't have the space to allow a full discussion here, I direct readers to www.stanford.edu/~mcfaul/ to read a longer version. I do have a fundamental disagreement with Anatol Lieven about the purpose of American power. In the longstanding Democratic tradition of Presidents Wilson, Truman, Kennedy and Clinton, I believe that the US government and the American people should assist those oppressed by autocratic regimes. Lieven does not. On this issue, I look forward to demonstrating why my approach is not only more principled than Lieven's but also more effective

for defending American national interests.

We cannot have this debate, however, until Lieven actually reads what I have written on the subject. Lieven's essay cuts and pastes arguments from so-called liberal hawks, so-called neocons, Bush Administration officials and his own imagination, and then declares that he is presenting a synthetic platform of the liberal hawks in the Democratic Party. The sum, instead, is a gross distortion of my position and others mentioned in his piece.

Lieven claims that I do not understand the difference between Arab nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism, and implores me to learn the lessons from the cold war, when US leaders confused nationalism and communism. Unlike Lieven, I am not an expert on the Middle East. When I have written on the subject, though, I have argued the following, now quoting from the same piece, "The Liberty Doctrine," that Lieven cites in his article: "In spearheading the successful struggle against communism, the United States made mistakes that must be avoided in the new campaign. Oftentimes we confused means and ends, so that all users of violence against noncommunist states and actors were considered part of the world communist movement. Not long ago, Nelson Mandela was labeled a 'communist terrorist'... Distinguishing between those focused on territorial or ethnic disputes and those dedicated to a global messianic mission is critical in the new war. During the battle against communism, we initially treated the entire communist world as monolithic, a mistake we cannot repeat with the Islamic world." In other words, I have written the exact opposite of what Lieven claims.

If *The Nation* would indulge me with more space, I could provide the same kind of quotations to refute the other truly vile arguments that Lieven assigns to me. I have never uttered anything even remotely close to the idea that "the only language Arabs understand is force"; I am not a unilateralist, but have written time and time again about the need for the United States to engage in reforming existing multilateral institutions as well as to create new international ones; I have written dozens of times that a true strategy for promoting democracy in the wider Middle East would have focused first on promoting democracy through nonmilitary means in Iran and Palestine; I am not opposed to "charity," but I have testified before Congress and written often about the need for more aid, including calling for the radical idea of creating a new, Cabinet-level department for international assistance! I do not advocate a "firm American command over the whining and useless dregs who make up the rest of humanity" and "openly

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*Cover by Gene Case & Stephen Kling/
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EDITORIALS

Ashcroft and After

Where will we be without John Ashcroft, his German shepherd's mug and fanatic's heart? In this season of cold comfort, it is impossible not to cheer the exit of the most destructive attorney general of the past 100 years, who responded to a great national crisis by steering the Justice Department on a narrow, stony path between the unconstitutional and the incompetent.

It is easy to forget now that by the time Al Qaeda's planes hit, it was already clear that Ashcroft was a piece of work. While his morning Bible meetings with top staff raised eyebrows, his appointments and policies bore all the hallmarks of a deadly serious and resolute ideologue. He filled the top positions at Justice with Federalist Society members, forced reluctant US Attorneys to aggressively promote the death penalty and undermined career lawyers who wanted to pursue voting irregularities in Florida.

Then, in the wake of September 11, Ashcroft embarked on his own private war against due process, dissent and freedom of information. In fact, he was a colossal failure even on his chosen terrain: preventive detention netted no would-be bombers, despite thousands of immigrants jailed and lives wrecked, while alienating Muslim communities at home and abroad. The first convictions obtained against Al Qaeda suspects in Detroit were eventually dropped because of Justice Department irregularities. Yet when the department's own Inspector General reported that hundreds of foreign nationals with no connection to terrorism were rounded up, imprisoned and denied their rights, Ashcroft's response was curt: We make no apologies.

Ashcroft, in the end, can't properly be called a conservative at all; rather, he used his job to expand executive branch authority, the power of police agencies to monitor citizens without judicial

oversight and the intrusion of government into private lives. Ashcroft treated criticism and dissent as treason, ethnicity as grounds for suspicion and Congressional and judicial oversight as inconvenient obstacles. No wonder that finally even a conservative attack dog like Congressman Bob Barr soured on Ashcroft justice; no wonder that even the Rehnquist Supreme Court slapped down the Administration's Guantánamo detention policies, declaring that even a state of war is not "a blank check."

President Bush's selection of White House counsel Alberto Gonzales to succeed Ashcroft shows that Bush has no intention of changing the tenor or the policies of the Justice Department. It was Gonzales who laid the legal groundwork for torture at Abu Ghraib with a memo claiming that detainees in the "war on terror" were not covered by the Geneva Conventions—which he described as "quaint." And it was Gonzales who urged the President to deny prisoner-of-war status to the detainees at Guantánamo, leaving them unprotected from coercive interrogation and endless imprisonment. With those two policies alone, it can fairly be said that he played a central role in blackening America's image throughout the world. Gonzales also played a major role in selecting extremist judicial nominees, consistently pushed the limits of executive privilege and publicly defended the Administration's policy of detaining terrorism suspects without access to lawyers or the courts.

The confirmation of Gonzales will be a test not only of Bush's intentions but of the fault lines within the GOP Senate majority; and a test, too, of the durability of the right-left civil liberties coalition that emerged in opposition to Ashcroft's abuse of the law. The temptation may be to heave a sigh of relief that Ashcroft is gone, and to view Gonzales as an improvement. That would be a crucial error. Gonzales's nomination should provoke the first in a series of battles over civil rights, the Supreme Court and the Constitution itself.

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The Nation (ISSN 0027-8378) is published weekly (except for the second week in January, and biweekly the third week of July through the second week of September) by The Nation Company, L.P. © 2004 in the U.S.A. by The Nation Company, L.P., 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. (212) 209-5400. Washington Bureau: Suite 308, 110 Maryland Avenue N.E., Washington, DC 20002. (202) 546-2239. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. Subscription orders, changes of address and all subscription inquiries: The Nation, PO Box 55149, Boulder, CO 80322-5149, or call 1-800-333-8536. Publications Mail Agreement No: 40041477. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to Circulation Dept. or DPGM, 4960-2 Walker Road, Windsor, ON N9A 6J3. **When ordering a subscription, please allow 4-6 weeks for receipt of your first issue and for all subscription transactions.** Back issues \$4 prepaid (\$6 foreign) from: The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. The Nation is available on microfilm from: University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Nation, PO Box 55149, Boulder, CO 80322-5149. Printed in U.S.A. on recycled paper.

INTERNET: Selections from the current issue become available Thursday night at www.thenation.com.

Yasir Arafat

As we go to press, Yasir Arafat lies in an apparently irreversible coma in a Paris hospital. He is dying just as he lived most of his life, giving mixed signals to the world, provoking rivalries among intimates and arousing wild speculation from allies and enemies alike.

It's not easy to take the measure of a man whose career has been obscured by so much propaganda and mythmaking. Especially in America, Arafat has been demonized as an arch-terrorist and derided as a bumbling rejectionist. Even as he lay on his deathbed, the *New York Times* repeated the accusation, branding him as "the man who refused to say yes" to Bill Clinton and Ehud Barak's inadequate and insulting Camp David 2000 settlement offer.

We in the West too often ignore what no Palestinian will ever forget: After the Palestinians' catastrophic defeat of 1948, when some 750,000 were expelled from their homeland and began living in destitution in refugee camps scattered across half a dozen countries, forgotten by the world, abused and cynically exploited by Arab despots and demagogues, it was Arafat who, along with a few comrades, gave birth to the Palestinian liberation movement. It was the PLO, under Arafat's leadership, that restored Palestinian pride and helped to forge a nation out of a population that was geographically dispersed and politically divided. And it was Arafat who led the PLO, in the face of fierce internal resistance, into adopting the two-state solution in the mid-1970s. But his conciliatory peace offering at the UN General Assembly in 1974, and numerous subsequent peace feelers, were met with persistent rebuffs from Israel and the United States.

The caricature of Arafat as a rejectionist obscures his real failures. In a bid to regain the leadership role that he saw slipping away during the first intifada, when he was exiled in Tunisia, he signed the deeply flawed Oslo Accords. That may have won him a Nobel Peace Prize and grudging acceptance from the Israelis and Americans, but his people got very little in return: no end to the occupation, massive expansion of Israeli settlements, accelerated expropriation of Palestinian land, and economic strangulation.

Arafat compounded the damage by imposing a corrupt and incompetent regime on his own people after his return from exile. The great Palestinian critic and activist Edward Said, once an Arafat ally, came to revile him, denouncing him in these pages as "a Pétain figure who has taken advantage of his people's exhaustion and kept himself in power by conceding virtually everything significant about our political and human rights...buying people off and torturing, imprisoning or killing dissidents at will." Arafat also impeded the transition to a new generation of leaders, which the Palestinians desperately need now, in the thirty-seventh year of an increasingly brutal occupation.

Yasir Arafat has often been called the father of Palestinian nationalism. Yet if the national liberation movement survives his death, it will be because of the steadfastness and resilience of the Palestinian people, and in spite of Arafat's leadership rather than because of it. They deserve better than they have been given, by the world and by their first leader.

A Stolen Election?

Before the vote-counting was done, the e-mails started arriving. The election's been stolen! Fraud! John Kerry won! In the following days, these charges flew over the Internet. The basic claim was that the early exit polls—which showed Kerry ahead of George W. Bush—were right; the vote tallies were rigged. Could this be? Or have ballot booths with electronic voting machines become the new Grassy Knoll for conspiracy theorists?

Anyone who questioned the integrity of the nation's voting system—before the election or after—has had good reason to do so. Electronic voting that does not produce an auditable paper trail is worrisome—as is the possibility that the machines can be hacked. The proponents of these systems claim there are sufficient safeguards. But in this election there were numerous reports of e-voting gone bad. Votes cast for one candidate were registered for another. In Broward County, Florida, software subtracted votes rather than added them. In Franklin County, Ohio, an older electronic machine reported an extra 3,893 votes for Bush. Local election officials caught that error. But when I asked Peggy Howell, one of those officials, why the mistake occurred, she replied, "We really don't know." Were these errors statistically insignificant glitches that inevitably happen in any large system? "It gives us the uneasy feeling that we're only seeing the tip of the iceberg," Cindy Cohn of the Electronic Frontier Foundation, which is part of the Election Protection Coalition, told Reuters. "What has most concerned scientists are problems that are not observable," David Jefferson, a computer scientist at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California, explained to the Associated Press. "The fact that we had a relatively smooth election...does not change at all the vulnerability these systems have to fraud or bugs." And the 2000 fiasco in Florida demonstrated that non-electronic voting can also have serious problems, which often disproportionately affect low-income counties.

Then there's the issue of who is running the show. Only a few companies manufacture electronic voting machines. They are not transparent. They do not use open-source code. Last year, Walden O'Dell, the head of Diebold, a leading manufacturer of touch-screen machines, declared in a fundraising letter for the Ohio Republican Party that he was "committed to helping Ohio deliver its electoral votes to the president next year." That hardly inspired confidence. And across the country, oversight of voting is conducted by partisan officials. In Ohio, Secretary of State Kenneth Blackwell, a Republican and conservative activist, oversaw the voting. On his watch, the polling place for Kenyon College was equipped with only two voting machines. Yet about 1,100 people—mostly students—wanted to vote there. These voters (and you can guess whom they preferred) had to wait up to nine hours. It doesn't require much cynicism to suspect this was no accident.

But did something more foul than minor slip-ups and routine political chicanery occur? At this point, those who say yes are relying more on supposition than evidence. They cite the exit polls to claim the vote count was falsified to benefit Bush. The pollsters say they oversampled women, that their survey takers were not allowed to get close enough to the polls and that Kerry supporters

may have been more willing to cooperate with the pollsters than Bush backers. Impossible, huffs pollster/consultant Dick Morris: "Exit polls are almost never wrong." But Morris argues that the faulty exit polls are not a sign the vote count was off but an indication that the pollsters deliberately produced pro-Kerry results "to try to chill the Bush turnout." (Talk about conspiracy theory.) The screwy exit polls do raise questions, but they are not proof of sabotage. And left-of-center accusers have promoted contradictory theories. Many suggest Diebold and other vendors put in the fix via the paperless touch-screen machines. But other critics—including progressive talk-show host and author Thom Hartmann—also point to a spreadsheet created by an activist named Kathy Dopp that shows what she considers anomalous pro-Bush results in Florida counties that used optical-scan voting, not electronic touch-screen voting. (The optical-scan machines were manufactured by Diebold and the other firms that produce the touch-screen machines.) But Walter Mebane, a Cornell professor, and colleagues at Harvard and Stanford examined this allegation of fraud and concluded that it is "baseless." They note that the counties in question are mostly in the conservative Florida Panhandle and "have trended strongly Republican over the past twelve years."

Making a different we-wuz-robbed claim, journalist Greg Palast, in an article bluntly titled "Kerry Won..." contends the Democrat would have definitely triumphed in Ohio had the final tally included the uncounted ballots—by which he means 92,672 ballots that did not register a vote when run through a counting machine—and the 155,000 provisional ballots. Palast wrongly assumes that an overwhelming majority of these ballots contain votes for Kerry, who lost by 136,000 votes. Not all of the provisional ballots, however, would pass legal muster. (Ohio Democrats estimated less than 90 percent would be valid.) And more important, the 92,672 other ballots, if hand-counted, probably would not have produced a major vote gain for Kerry. After the Florida 2000 mess, I examined almost a third of the 10,500 uncounted votes in Miami-Dade County. Of those, only a few hundred contained a discernible vote. Tallying them produced merely a five-vote edge for Al Gore. It is highly improbable that the pool of uncounted and provisional ballots in Ohio could have yielded Kerry a net gain of more than 136,000 votes.

Clear away the rhetoric, and what's mainly left are the odd early exit polls (which did show Kerry's lead in Ohio and Florida

CALVIN TRILLIN

INFINITESIMAL SILVER LINING

The Nader Vote, we find, did not exist.
No harm was done by Ralph, that *avis* rarest.
So, not a factor, as he was before,
He needn't now feel guilty, just embarrassed.

COMMENT

declining as Election Day went on and which ended up with the current national Bush-Kerry spread), troubling instances of bad electronic voting, and curious—or possibly curious—trends in Florida. This may be the beginning of a case; it is not a case in itself. Investigative reporter Robert Parry observes, “Theoretically, at least, it is conceivable that sophisticated CIA-style computer hacking—known as ‘cyber-warfare’—could have let George W. Bush’s campaign transform a three-percentage-point defeat, as measured by exit polls, into an official victory of about the same margin. Whether such a scheme is feasible, however, is another matter, since it would require penetration of hundreds of local computer systems across the country, presumably from a single remote location. The known CIA successes in cyber-war have come from targeting a specific bank account or from shutting down an adversary’s computer system, not from altering data simultaneously in a large number of computers.”

The skeptics—correct or not in their claims of fraud—are right to be concerned in general about the vote-counting system. Representatives John Conyers, Jerrold Nadler and Robert Wexler have asked the Government Accountability Office (formerly the General Accounting Office) to investigate the “voting machines and new technologies used in the 2004 election.” Blackboxvoting.org—a group that has long decried electronic voting and now claims that “fraud took place in the 2004 election”—has filed Freedom of Information Act requests to obtain internal computer logs and other documents from 3,000 counties and localities, in an attempt to audit the election. The public does deserve any information that would allow it to evaluate vote-counting. Beyond that, extensive election reform is necessary. Electronic voting ought to produce a paper trail that can be examined. There should be national standards for voting systems and for verifying vote tallies. And vote counters should be nonpartisan public servants, not secretive corporations or party hacks. The system ought to be so solid that no one would have cause even to wonder whether an election has been stolen.

DAVID CORN

The Faith Factor

Charlottesville, Virginia

If all the loathsome spectacles we’ve endured since November 2—the vampire-like gloating of CNN commentator Robert Novak, Bush embracing his “mandate”—none are more repulsive than that of Democrats conceding the “moral values” edge to the party that brought us Abu Ghraib. The cries for Democrats to overcome their “out-of-touch-ness” and embrace the predominant faith all dodge the full horror of the situation: A criminal has been enabled to continue his bloody work with the help, in no small part, of self-identified Christians.

With their craven, breast-beating response to Bush’s electoral triumph, leading Democrats only demonstrate how out of touch they really are with the religious transformation of America. Where secular-type liberals and centrists go wrong is in categorizing religion as a form of “irrationality,” akin to spirituality, sports mania and emotion generally. They fail to see that the current “Christianization” of red-state America bears no resemblance to

the Great Revival of the early nineteenth century, an ecstatic movement that filled the fields of Virginia with the rolling, shrieking and jerking bodies of the revived. In contrast, today’s right-leaning Christian churches represent a coldly Calvinist tradition in which even speaking in tongues, if it occurs at all, has been increasingly routinized and restricted to the pastor. What these churches have to offer, in addition to intangibles like eternal salvation, is concrete, material assistance. They have become an alternative welfare state, whose support rests not only on “faith” but also on the loyalty of the grateful recipients.

Drive out from Washington to the Virginia suburbs, for example, and you’ll find the McLean Bible Church, spiritual home of Senator James Inhofe and other prominent right-wingers, still hopping on a weekday night. Dozens of families and teenagers enjoy a low-priced dinner in the cafeteria; a hundred unemployed people meet for prayer and job tips at the “Career Ministry”; divorced and abused women gather in support groups. Among its many services, MBC distributes free clothing to 10,000 poor people a year, helped start an inner-city ministry for at-risk youth in DC and operates a “special needs” ministry for disabled children.

MBC is a mega-church with a parking garage that could serve a medium-sized airport, but many smaller evangelical churches offer a similar array of services—childcare, after-school programs, ESL lessons, help in finding a job, not to mention the occasional cash handout. A woman I met in Minneapolis gave me her strategy for surviving bouts of destitution: “First, you find a church.” A trailer-park dweller in Grand Rapids told me that he often turned to his church for help with the rent. Got a drinking problem, a vicious spouse, a wayward child, a bill due? Find a church. The closest analogy to America’s bureaucratized evangelical movement is Hamas, which draws in poverty-stricken Palestinians through its own miniature welfare state.

Nor is the local business elite neglected by the evangelicals. Throughout the red states—and increasingly the blue ones too—evangelical churches are vital centers of “networking,” where the carwash owner can schmooze with the bank’s loan officer. Some churches offer regular Christian businessmen’s “fellowship lunches,” where religious testimonies are given and business cards traded, along with jokes aimed at Democrats and gays.

Mainstream, even liberal, churches also provide a range of services, from soup kitchens to support groups. What makes the typical evangelicals’ social welfare efforts sinister is their implicit—and sometimes not so implicit—linkage to a program for the destruction of public and secular services. This year the connecting code words were “abortion” and “gay marriage”: To vote for the candidate who opposed these supposed moral atrocities, as the Christian Coalition and so many churches strongly advised, was to vote against public housing subsidies, childcare and expanded public forms of health insurance. While Hamas operates in a nonexistent welfare state, the Christian right advances by attacking the existing one.

Of course, Bush’s faith-based social welfare strategy only accelerates the downward spiral toward theocracy. Not only do the right-leaning evangelical churches offer their own, shamelessly proselytizing social services; not only do they attack candidates who favor expanded public services—but they stand to gain public

money by doing so. It is this dangerous positive feedback loop, and not any new spiritual or moral dimension of American life, that the Democrats have failed to comprehend: The evangelical church-based welfare system is being fed by the deliberate destruction of the secular welfare state.

In the aftermath of election '04, centrist Democrats should not be flirting with faith but re-examining their affinity for candidates too mumble-mouthed and compromised to articulate poverty and war as the urgent moral issues they are. Jesus is on our side here, and secular liberals should not be afraid to invoke him. Policies of pre-emptive war and the upward redistribution of wealth are inversions of the Judeo-Christian ethic, which is for the most part silent, or mysteriously cryptic, on gays and abortion. At the very least, we need a firm commitment to public forms of childcare, healthcare, housing and education—for people of all faiths and no faith at all. Secondly, progressives should perhaps rethink their own disdain for service-based outreach programs. Once it was the left that provided “alternative services” in the form of free clinics, women’s health centers, food co-ops and inner-city multi-service storefronts. Enterprises like these are not substitutes for an adequate public welfare state, but they can become the springboards from which to demand one.

One last lesson from the Christians—the ancient, original ones, that is. Theirs is the story of how a steadfast and heroic moral minority undermined the world’s greatest empire and eventually came to power. Faced with relentless and spectacular forms of repression, they kept on meeting over their potluck dinners (the origins of later communion rituals), proselytizing and bearing witness wherever they could. For the next four years and well beyond, liberals and progressives will need to emulate these original Christians, who stood against imperial Rome with their bodies, their hearts and their souls.

BARBARA EHRENREICH

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Banned in the USA

To describe the election results of November 2 as a setback for LGBT rights is an understatement. For months supporters of marriage equality, sympathetic media outlets and many Democratic operatives convinced themselves that Iraq and the economy would trump social concerns. With exit polls showing that 22 percent of voters held “moral values” to be most important, it’s no wonder the eleven states from Utah to Georgia that faced anti-gay marriage amendments saw them enacted by overwhelming margins. An 86–14 split for the amendment in Mississippi isn’t all that surprising, but a 57–43 approval in Oregon—the one state where marriage equality activists felt they had a chance to win—left social conservatives giddy. “This is just the beginning of the revolution for people of faith and conservatives,” said a gleeful Phil Burress, president of Ohio’s Citizens for Community Values.

The blame game has already started, with more than a few Democrats wondering out loud if those uppity gays cost them the

presidential election because the issue of marriage lured social conservatives to the polls in record numbers. But such a rush to judgment should not pre-empt a proper postmortem, aimed at finding out why marriage-equality activists lost and how to prevent it from happening again.

Some LGBT activists emphasize that the decks were stacked against them from the beginning. “We expected to lose most if not all of these early votes,” said Evan Wolfson of Freedom to Marry, “because no civil rights movement in its early stages can expect to win an up-or-down vote, especially in states that have never really been at the forefront of civil rights advances in American history.”

November 2 also proved that marriage-equality supporters needed more cash to fight what amounted to the country’s first de facto national referendum, where one in five US voters decided the issue of marriage. Pro-marriage activists in Oregon raised the most—nearly \$3 million—but were still outmatched by their opponents. “Oregon shows that when we have closer to the money we need, but not fully the time we need, we are able to come closer to winning,” Wolfson said. “The key to winning the marriage discussion with Americans is for fair-minded people to have enough time to take a deep breath, not just have their hot buttons pushed; see the faces and hear the stories of real families; and get over their anxiety about change.”

Although there is now much talk about what the gay agenda cost Kerry in terms of his presidential bid, some marriage-equality activists pointed out that retaliation didn’t surface at the local level. Chris Swope, executive director of the statewide LGBT advocacy group Michigan Equality, noted that even though his state’s amendment (written so broadly that it may prohibit not just gay marriage but civil unions and domestic partner benefits) was passed by an eighteen-point spread, local races showed that voters weren’t punishing progay politicians. Of the twenty-eight candidates Michigan Equality endorsed in Statehouse races, twenty-four ended up winning. “We have a net pickup of two LGBT-supportive legislators that will be in the Michigan House of Representatives,” Swope explained.

The amendment losses overshadowed the one bright spot for LGBT equality on election day, the defeat of Article 12 in Cincinnati, Ohio. Passed in a citywide referendum in 1993, Article 12 changed Cincinnati’s charter to ban any “minority or protected status” of its gay and lesbians citizens, making it one of the most virulently antigay laws in the country. In 2004, a year in which Ohio voters approved a gay marriage ban by twenty-four points and Cincinnati voters turned out for Bush, Article 12 was repealed by more than 10,000 votes. For Justin Turner, campaign manager for Citizens to Restore Fairness, overturning Article 12 meant spending the time and money the state-initiative opponents only dreamed of having. “This campaign was about two years in the making, of going door to door, talking to people and educating people on the issue,” he said, noting that his group had 3,000 volunteers building coalitions with communities across the city. Compare that with the campaign in nearby Kentucky, which had only 2,000–2,500 volunteers working less than a year to defeat the marriage amendment in the entire state.

“We were outspent three to one on the airwaves in the closing

(Continued on Page 21)

PATRICIA J. WILLIAMS

Taking the Hospital

In the postelection world, holding evangelical Protestantism up to the light has become all the rage, which does seem somewhat like shutting the barn door after the horse has left the barn. I guess when George Bush kicked off his first campaign at Bob Jones University a lot of people didn't take it seriously. When he cozied up to Focus on the Family, some thought it was just politics. And when Ralph Reed became one of Bush's top advisers, there were a lot of people still saying there was no difference between Democrats and Republicans. Anyway, now we have lots of time to consider why all this might be really, really bad news, not just for liberals but for moderates of any stripe. These days we can take our morning coffee to James Dobson of Focus on the Family explaining to NPR precisely why secular humanists don't understand the power of moral values.

For me the big divide is as basic as a battle about dinosaurs. As I write, the ACLU is in court challenging a sticker placed on all science textbooks by the Cobb County, Georgia, school board. "The text of it is very, very simple and innocuous," says attorney Seth Cooper. "It says students should study evolution with an open mind." Jamie Self, director of the Georgia Family Council, explains, "If we really want to pursue intellectual honesty, when we're teaching our kids, it really is the only way to go. It is a theory; no one has ever come out and said 'evolution is a fact.' And so, if we're going to be teaching it, kids need to understand that it is a 'theory.'"

Of course, it comes down to what you mean by "theory." Scientists use the word to describe a set of governing principles that explain physical phenomena. It doesn't mean theoretical in the lay sense of hypothetical. A scientific theory is a schema of analysis. To say that evolution is not grounded in fact is to say that carbon-dating is wrong, that chemistry is fiction, that paleontological data are the artful conjuration of an intelligent God. It's fine to believe this if you want to, but it's no way to run a nation. I turned to Dobson's website for a sense of what's at stake in this debate. There you can purchase books like Phillip Johnson's *Reason in the Balance: The Case Against Naturalism in Science, Law and Education* to help you "know where you stand and why in this present cultural war against God!" *The Evolution Set* is a documentary collection "presenting solid evidence—even at the cellular level—for intelligent, purposeful design in living beings." *It Couldn't Just Happen: Fascinating Facts About God's World*, by Lawrence Richards, supposedly "delivers solid proof of God's existence and the evidence that He created and sustains the universe." *Dry Bones and Other Fossils*, by Gary and Mary Parker, invites young readers to join the Parker family on "their annual fossil hunt" and to learn how fossils "provide evidence for creation, rather than evolution.... Includes tips on fossil collection and preservation and a Gospel presentation." Another site, Contender Ministries, devoted to end-time theology and fears of the Satan-loving UN taking over the world, advises that "the evolutionist believes in evolution—not because it is scientific, but because he considers himself too wise to

believe in God.... This humanist worldview, which denies God and instead, chooses a scientifically unprovable theory, is the religious doctrine of the American educational system."

If a large majority of Democrats are arguing with a significant percentage of red-staters who believe that evolution is only an opinion, then we are not on the same page as to much of anything else about the planet. We do not share the same constructs of proof, evidence or the scientific method. If every sentence in the Bible is literally true, then what I call fact and

what you call truth are separate genres, galaxies apart. And if, as an evangelical friend who is praying for my soul asserts, God made George Bush President, one might just as well concede that a large chunk of planetary history doesn't exist, that the future is preordained and that the battle in the Middle East is leading us to a great Armageddon among all God's tribes. Therefore, the debate about moral values has less to do with abortion rights than it does, as I said, with whether the dinosaurs existed as one link in life's eonslong chain of development. Because if they did not, then nothing in the material world remains "true"—indeed, the entire intellectual grounding of Western thought must be called into question, as must a moral schema grounded in material consequence.

As I write, American troops are pursuing an estimated 2,000 insurgents, blasting away at Falluja, a city of approximately 300,000 residents. Some civilians have fled, but certainly not hundreds of thousands. It is interesting: The first thing our soldiers did when they entered the city was to take over the hospital, reportedly because our leaders worry that doctors there are really operating propaganda mills and milking sympathy for untoward ends. They believe that the number of civilian deaths reported by hospitals, in international mortality reports and by the Red Cross has been inflated. All those pictures of weeping families and bloody sheets are merely the heresy of freedom's nonbelievers, we are left to suppose. And so the Red Cross is no longer in the city. Médecins Sans Frontières was forced to pull out of Iraq weeks ago. A report from the British medical journal *The Lancet*, putting the Iraqi death toll at 100,000 since the US invasion began, has been denounced as methodologically flawed, flat-out false and no more than a theory.

I waited for the non-propaganda figures to come out of this assault on Falluja, the truthful toll, some data to assure us that numbers of civilian deaths distinguish us from Saddam Hussein. At the end of three days of heavy fighting, the news was "good." Coalition casualties were reported to be light. But nowhere could I find any mention of numbers of residents killed. The silence has been light as a feather, warm as a blanket, gentle as faith. Perhaps they never existed, maybe it was all in our heads. But as American forces level this city in our name, let us stop acting stricken about what Jesus is supposedly whispering in the ears of our nation's home-grown fundamentalists. In the name of sanity, we must demand that this Administration, not God, start talking some talk about our evolution to this dreadful point. ■



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ERIC ALTERMAN

Pin the Terrorist on the Donkey

It's impossible to pinpoint any single factor that determined the Democrats' defeat on election day, but a significant disadvantage that is going unremarked in the discussion of "God," "gays" and "values" in the election's aftermath is the naked partisanship and political dishonesty of the conservative punditocracy who dominate our public discourse.

Given the reality of a 24/7 propaganda machine in the place of what was once a largely nonpartisan media structure, Democrats must compete at a significant disadvantage in any contested election. Evidence of the pundits' willingness to cast aside traditional measures of disinterested analysis, or even nominal self-respect, can be found in the almost universal assumption, adopted without a shred of evidence, that Osama bin Laden's video election intervention would prove an unambiguous boon to the President's hopes for his first legitimate election victory.

Immediately after the video surfaced, virtually every voice in the public square accepted the Bush campaign's amazing contention that the terrorist who taunted Bush, mocked him, attacked his nation and then escaped retribution—despite Bush's schoolboy macho posturing at the time—would remind voters of why only George W. Bush could be trusted to protect the nation. While the assumption that Bush was "winning" the terrorism issue was not without foundation, this too was largely a reflection of the mainstream media's unwillingness to focus either on Bush's failure to capture bin Laden or on the benefits bin Ladenism has clearly enjoyed as a result of Bush's incompetent invasion of Iraq. As the *Christian Science Monitor* reported, experts such as Rand Corporation vice president Bruce Hoffman believe that, given the above, "Bin Laden probably prefer[s] the current administration."

In light of all this, pundits might have been expected to mount a coherent argument to justify their eagerness to read from the Rovian script. Alas, this would be wishful thinking. As the folks at Media Matters have helpfully documented, the baseless consensus that the bin Laden broadcast benefited Bush included, among others, William Safire, Peggy Noonan, Sean Hannity, Roger Simon, Joe Scarborough, Pat Buchanan, Dick Morris, Karen Tumulty, Mike Barnicle, Chris Matthews, Andrea Mitchell, Morton Kondracke, Jeffrey H. Birnbaum, Bill O'Reilly, Charlie Cook, Lawrence Kudlow, G. Gordon Liddy, Stephen Hayes, Major Garrett, Jeff Greenfield, Neil Cavuto, Fred Barnes and Bill Gertz. Each insisted that the bin Laden intervention either intended to help Kerry, would help Bush because voters would perceive bin Laden as wanting to help Kerry or would simply help Bush because that's the way things are. Given that the grand total of sources inside Al Qaeda shared by this collective hot-air production factory is approximately zero, one can only assume that they were projecting their own prejudices. (Many, including Safire, pointed to the pre-election bombing in Spain as a precedent, apparently unaware that evidence indicates it had actually been planned years before the US invasion of Iraq and Spain's agreement to join the US-led "coalition.")



When tested by pollsters, the pundits' analyses proved lighter than air. Stan Greenberg's Democracy Corps poll found that 46 percent of respondents said the tape "makes me think that George W. Bush took his eye off the ball in Afghanistan and diverted resources to Iraq," while just 36 percent said, "It underscores the importance of George Bush's approach to the war on terrorism." Gallup also noted a net loss for Bush on the security issue, post-video.

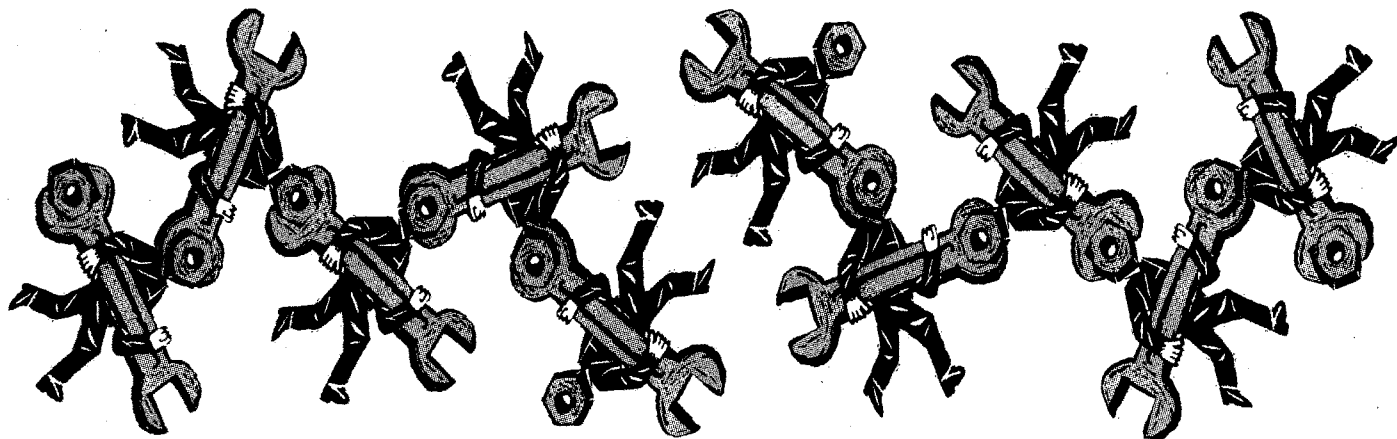
No matter. Moving from obstinate ignorance to McCarthyite malevolence, a number of pundits insisted that the video showed that Kerry and the Democrats could now be viewed as on the same side with bin Laden and the terrorists—along with any other nation that has dared to dissent from Bush Administration dogma. Laura Ingraham accused Kerry voters of aligning themselves "with the people of France...with China...which actually came out today saying they hate, they don't like George Bush's foreign policy. You heard Osama bin Laden try to inject himself into American politics. So all these people you're aligning yourself with, it's not good." Right-wing dope fiend Rush Limbaugh upped the ante, insisting that "a Kerry victory after the bin Laden tape, will accomplish this—it'll give Osama bin Laden bragging rights all across the Middle East." Rupert Murdoch's *New York Post* descended even more deeply into its glitter-filled gutter with a lying headline that said bin Laden "Urges Bush Defeat." A miscreant *Post* columnist named Adam Brodsky actually wrote, "A vote for Kerry is a vote for European anti-Semitism. And terrorists. In Iraq...and Israel. It's a vote for Hamas and Hezbollah, Syria and Iran." Finally, he added, a vote for the man who won three purple hearts in Vietnam while Bush was home drinking in bars was a vote for Al Qaeda.

If the Olympics were ever to introduce a competition for intellectual acrobatics, the hands-down gold medal winner this year would be Dick Morris. On October 23, just before the video surfaced, the disgraced Clinton adviser asked Sean Hannity, "Do you hear a peep out of them? Do you hear a bin Laden tape?" A deeply impressed Hannity declared Morris to be "100 percent right." Likewise, two days later, speaking to Bill O'Reilly, America's most famous foot-fetishist explained, "Al Qaeda attacked us in Spain before the election. Al Qaeda attacked Australia before the election. Hamas and Hezbollah attack Israel before every election, and there has been no Al Qaeda attack anywhere in the world in months. No bin Laden tape, no threats coming out of it, and I think that Al Qaeda is voting with its silence for John Kerry."

But it turns out that in Morris's universe, bin Laden votes for Kerry when he's silent and he votes for Kerry when he's not. After the tape's release, Morris told Fox viewers that "obviously" the tape was "a design on [bin Laden's] part to help Kerry, and that's going to backfire massively." Hannity earned a silver with his own Pythonesque pirouette on his previous pronouncement: Bin Laden, he now said, had "come out and virtually [tr]ied to influence the election today in favor of John Kerry."

It's going to be a long four years. ■

ARTICLES



PETER O. ZIERLEIN

Progressives: Get Ready to Fight

With their bitter defeat in 2004, Democrats are now undeniably a minority party in opposition. Opposition can be fruitful or barren. In 1992 Clinton's victory gave Democrats control of the White House and Congress in a divided nation, but Newt Gingrich and the right unleashed a relentless opposition, rallied their base and put forth a national agenda, the Contract With America, to win the 1994 Congressional elections. After Clinton demoralized his base with NAFTA, electrified the right over gays in the military and tax increases, and failed to deliver on healthcare, Republicans swept Democrats out of their majority in both houses of Congress for the first time in forty years.

In contrast, after Bush stole the election in 2000, demoralized Democrats rolled over on his tax cuts, authorized Bush to make war on Iraq, offered no unified critique of his failed economics and had no national message in the by-elections. Bush led Republicans to gains in both houses by nationalizing the election, impugning his opponents' patriotism and developing the mobilization strategies that proved so effective this year.

In the coming months, progressives can drive the response to Bush's victory, just as the right drove the response to Clinton's. Thus we must take a close look at 2004, what we can build on and where we should go.

Progressives Rising

Even in the ashes of this defeat, progressives can take pride in the remarkable role we played, both in arousing opposition to Bush and in building the independent progressive machinery necessary to communicate, educate, register and get out the vote.

Howard Dean gave Democrats their voice. The Dean campaign and MoveOn.org broke the grip of big donors in the Democratic primaries and helped Democrats utilize the Internet. Kerry ended with a 7-to-1 Internet fundraising advantage over Bush. Democrats became competitive with Republicans in raising hard money.

Progressives drove the remarkable mobilization that put

together a multicultural democracy movement. Independent progressive groups and leaders—from ACORN to USAction and America Coming Together, to Bruce Springsteen, Russell Simmons, P. Diddy and the hip-hop nation—reached out to workers, the young, minorities and single women. Their success was confirmed in the exit polls. Union households remained at 25 percent of an expanded electorate and voted nearly two to one for Kerry.

African-Americans increased their percentage of the electorate and voted nine to one for Kerry. More young people between 18 and 29 voted than in 2000—4.6 million more—and were the only age group to go for Kerry. The proportion of Hispanics in the electorate increased, and, although Bush gained ground, they still supported Kerry 53 to 44.

Progressives expanded our capacity to generate ideas, communicate our message and educate Americans. From MoveOn.org and house parties around Robert Greenwald's DVDs *Outfoxed* and *Uncovered*, to Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11*, to Internet portals, Air America Radio, paid ads by MoveOn.org and the Media Fund, the raft of anti-Bush books, progressives drove the debate.

What Went Wrong

Bush won a majority of the popular vote by increasing the turnout and his margin in the "red states," those that went for Bush in 2000. Kerry edged out Bush in the total vote in battleground states, but Bush won his Electoral College edge in Ohio and Florida by increasing the turnout and his margin in pro-Republican precincts in those states. The Republican mobilization, fueled by volunteers in precincts across the country, often anchored in evangelical churches, tracked down and turned out conservative, pro-Bush voters of every stripe. For the first time, self-described Republicans matched Democrats in the number of voters who turned up at the polls.

"Morals trumped economics, even in Ohio," conclude the pundits. But the reality was more complicated. In an election day poll for the Institute for America's Future, taken by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research, respondents were split on what factor most influenced their choice. About 20 percent said it was eco-

**ROBERT L. BOROSAGE AND
KATRINA VANDEN HEUVEL**

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nomics and jobs; these people voted two to one for Kerry. About 20 percent said it was the war on terror; they voted three to one for Bush. The 20 percent who named Iraq as most important voted overwhelmingly for Kerry. A similar number chose morals and voted overwhelmingly for Bush, while the smaller percentages that chose healthcare and education went big for Kerry. Where the question was performance—Iraq and the economy, healthcare, education—Bush lost. Where it was worldview—morals and the war on terror—Bush won big.

A majority of voters did not support the President's policies. By 51 to 41, voters considered the country to be "substantially on the wrong course." A majority wanted change. A plurality—49 to 46—said that the war on Iraq was making America less safe, not more safe. By significant majorities, voters supported protecting Social Security over privatizing it, fair trade over free trade, investment in education and healthcare over paring back spending and reducing the deficit. The voters who handed Florida and Nevada to Bush also voted overwhelmingly to pass initiatives to raise the minimum wage in the those states.

In the America's Future poll, most voters said they were looking for an election that provided answers about the economy and jobs rather than how to make America safe. This was particularly true among wavering Bush voters—those who ended up voting for Bush but thought about voting for Kerry. With a campaign focused on Iraq and the war on terror, with little attention paid to kitchen-table concerns, many ended up voting their social conservatism.

The power of the so-called "moral issues"—God, guns and gays—is apparent. But the potential of a compelling populist economic argument is too often slighted. Consider the so-called Nascar Dads—socially conservative, patriotic white males who've voted Republican in large numbers since the early 1980s and who have lost ground in the new economy. The AFL-CIO and associated unions showed how economic issues could matter. They made a concerted effort to reach their members on issues like vanishing overtime pay, soaring healthcare costs, the loss of jobs. This effort paid off. White men in general voted for Bush by a margin of eighteen percentage points; white men who were union members favored Kerry by twenty-one points. Weekly churchgoers favored Bush by twenty-one points; weekly churchgoers who were union members favored Kerry by twelve. Gun owners chose Bush by twenty points; union gun owners opted for Kerry by twelve. And it didn't take a lifetime of union membership to produce this effect. This year, the AFL's Working America enlisted more than 750,000 people as associate members of the federation and educated them on kitchen-table issues like outsourcing and healthcare. In Ohio, Florida and Missouri, white males went for Bush by twenty-three percentage points. In tracking polls leading up to the election, Working America's white male members chose Kerry by twenty-one points. Married women in those states favored Bush by thirteen; Working America wives preferred Kerry by twenty-three. Morals didn't trump economics; the economic cards simply weren't dealt.

What Is to Be Done?

In the wake of defeat, there will and should be reassessment inside the Democratic Party. But progressives drive this party now—we provide the energy, the organizers, the ground forces,

the ideas and much of the money. We should organize the opposition. Here's a start:

§ *Get Ready to Fight.* Bush's agenda will ignite opposition. The current offensive in Iraq will galvanize antiwar sentiment across the world—including among the conservative realists in the Republican Party. The President's budget, featuring some \$70 billion more for Iraq plus cuts across the board for education and other domestic programs, will highlight the financial costs of his folly. Progressives should continue to challenge this war and educate Americans on how it is making us less safe.

The President claims a mandate for a radical domestic agenda—privatization of Social Security, tax reform to reward wealth over work, drill-and-burn energy policy, tort "reform" to limit victims' rights to recover from negligent corporations, more testing in schools while cutting resources needed to fix the problems. He's likely to make an early Supreme Court appointment. These are all battles that progressives should fight, offering Americans a clear choice.

§ *Take the Offensive.* Progressives should mount a powerful assault on Republican boss Tom DeLay and the most corrupt Congress in memory, exposing the blatant giveaway of taxpayers' money to corporate contributors and spreading the word to Republican districts so voters learn about the crony corruption that is emblematic of this crowd.

§ *Ideas and Local Invention.* Progressives have to do more than oppose. We have to develop compelling arguments for moving the country in a different direction: What should America's role in the world be? How can we create a fairer economy? What kind of society do we want to be? This requires new big ideas—strategic initiatives for good jobs and energy independence like those of the Apollo Alliance. Progressives should turn states and localities into "laboratories of democracy." California voters just passed an initiative to borrow \$3 billion to seed stem-cell research, insuring that that state will be a global center in this area. The Apollo Alliance is developing state initiatives on energy efficiency and renewable energy. In the Midwest, conservative Federal Reserve analysts are leading the argument for investing in preschool and early-childhood healthcare as an economic development policy.

In this election Progressive Majority recruited a team of progressive candidates for state and local office in three battleground states—Washington, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. In Washington, their victories helped shift the State Senate into Democratic hands. All told, their candidates won 57 percent of open seats. Now they are gearing up to expand to ten states in the next cycle, finding the next generation of Paul Wellstones who see themselves as part of a movement.

§ *Argue Our Case.* Progressives should be aggressively arguing our case—and learning how to argue our case more effectively. Politicians are now scrambling for ways to appeal to the "values" voter. Some of this is common sense: Religious observance is not a Republican monopoly. Democrats who are comfortable with religion, like Jimmy Carter, Jesse Jackson and Bill Clinton, fare better in this very religious country. And progressives should be making our case in moral terms, not simply in the language of policy seminars.

But that does not mean abandoning the party's principles on social issues like choice or equal rights. Democrats champion the values of the civilizing movements of recent decades—the

civil rights movement, the women's movement, the environmental movement, the human rights movement. We should lead the forces of tolerance against the forces of intolerance. We win by being the party of progress, not by blurring differences with the new reactionaries.

§ *Build Independent Capacity.* Progressives should build on this year's extraordinary efforts to register, educate and mobilize voters. New focus should be on building volunteer networks from community organizations (as the right has done with evangelical churches). The competition over the growing Hispanic vote is a case in point. With Republicans in control of the leading Hispanic TV and radio networks, this project can't be left to the party, or to chance.

At the same time, progressives have to expand their capacity to generate ideas, develop a message, communicate issues and carry

out campaigns that can compete with the right. This is a long-term project that requires significant investment. Major donors and national and grassroots groups are already discussing it. MoveOn.org and Dean's Democracy for America have demonstrated the potential for building powerful movements based upon citizen involvement and small-donor support. That will be key if the debate is to break out of the narrow constraints of the Clinton years.

Progressives did more this year than anyone could have anticipated—and we still got beat by a bad President espousing a politics of division and distraction. So we have to get smarter, work harder, learn how to make our case better and find ways to communicate it across America's increasingly separated nations. The task is daunting. But we can undertake it, confident that, as Dr. King taught, the arc of history is long but it bends toward justice. ■

MAYBE LABOR SHOULD GIVE UP ON WASHINGTON IN FAVOR OF FRIENDLIER TERRAIN.

Take It to the Blue States

THOMAS GEOGHEGAN

Blue about November 2? As a labor lawyer in a Blue State, I'm ready to give up. Not because Bush will repeal the Wagner Act—I almost wish he would. The act is so screwed up, management could hardly have it any better. Worried about the National Labor Relations Board? Not really. No union serious about organizing uses it anymore.

The problem is, unions represent only about 8 percent of the workforce (private sector). When the airlines finish with Chapter 11, we could be even smaller. In four years, could labor in the private sector be more or less gone? I hope not. Anyway, I suppose someone will always be on strike at Yale.

The worst part about the next four years is that labor will be tied down, on Capitol Hill, fighting privatization of Social Security. We will be too bloodied, after that, to do much organizing in "the backlands."

Still, am I really that discouraged? You bet I am.

Let the real me step aside, then, and bring forward a me who pretends to believe why our defeat on November 2 is, or could be, a good thing. Because now, after November 2, we know that we are Two Nations. We should give up on DC.

Let's govern from the Blue States.

If we govern from the Blue States, it may be possible to bring the labor movement back. What do I mean by "governing from the Blue States"? Use state law as much as possible to set up the kind of social democracy we would like to see for the country as a whole.



How are we going to do this? It won't be easy, but it's a whole lot cheaper and easier than doing what we just did in the Kerry campaign. Let's keep intact America Coming Together and MoveOn. Let's give the kids who worked the streets something to do.

This will cost money, but if the voter breakdowns are right, the Democrats have dough, big dough. If the rich of the GOP can fund the Christian right, maybe Harvard can give a little more to labor, since at least a labor union is an institution of the Enlightenment.

tution of the Enlightenment.

First, we need places for people to meet. Instead of unions that people can join only if a majority of workers at a workplace decide they want to be members, we should have organizations, or clubs, that could include associate members, people like you and me who never dreamed we might have a union card. Let people, individually, one by one, sign up as union members, and not only as part of a "bargaining unit." In Europe, that's how they do it.

We need some place to go, and meet, and hang out, the way they do in the rural counties on the Christian right. Democrats will always be shy of a majority until we have places where we can be citizens. While the voting rate may have gone up, I have a hunch the number of real citizens keeps dropping. And the reason is that, as John Dewey wrote long ago, the last and least important thing about citizenship is voting. More important is to live a certain way of life. When many evangelical Christians went to the polls in 2004, they may have been voting for the first time. But they already were citizens, albeit not of this world, perhaps.

So? Let's bring people into clubs, as individual union members. Say I'm a salesman, in my car. Let me sign up as an individual, whether I work with anyone or not.

Yes, I know, it's an idea that has already appeared in this mag-

Last spring Thomas Geoghegan was a fellow at the American Academy in Berlin. His book Which Side Are You On? Trying to Be for Labor When It's Flat on Its Back was recently reissued by the New Press.

azine [see Barbara Ehrenreich and Thomas Geoghegan, "Lighting Labor's Fire," December 23, 2002]. Here it is, recycled: Have "associate" memberships, make the dues cheap and give people something in return to help them out at work. Not a discount at a hotel, but a one-on-one, labor-union kind of help. One idea: a talk with a lawyer, or legal advice. Or counseling. In one case I know, the Steelworkers have been doing this. In a pilot project in Minnesota, they now let anyone sign up to be an "associate member." As such a member, I can get counseling if I am fired or demoted. This pilot program is attempting something more substantial than the AFL-CIO version, Working America.

"But this kind of thing," said a friend, "would only appeal to a few." He's right. Very few. How about one in ten? That would double the size of labor.

What comes next? Give the new individual members and the old union members a place to meet and officers to elect. Set them up in organizations in every Blue State. Then lobby for changes in the labor laws of those states.

I know what some will say: "You can't use states to change federal labor law." That's right. There is a legal doctrine, known as pre-emption, that stops states from interfering with the Wagner Act and other federal labor laws. But even under the law of pre-emption there are many labor-law changes that states could make. For example, the Blue States could pass a law: "Nobody can be fired, except for just cause." That is, each Blue State could get rid of the old common law rule of "employment at will," which means "I can fire you for any reason at any time." Or for no reason. Or the color of your tie.

Any law in a Blue State that knocks out employment at will would do more for organizing in that Blue State than eking out a win over Bush and the right. How? Simple. It bulletproofs the people who want to join a union. When the boss tries to bust a union by firing Norma Rae without cause, she can go to court. Get a jury. Damages. Even an injunction. Contempt.

With this law, if we had organizing drives, we could get some cover for our people. If poor Norma Rae is fired now, all we can do is file charges with the NLRB. If we prove antiunion motive, maybe the board will act. There are no sanctions and no discovery, and it takes forever. Believe me, it would be much easier, and worse for employers, to go into a court under a state law and take depositions.

As we lawyers like to say, let's poke around their house.

There are other state law changes that we could make in New York, California, Illinois and New England that could boost labor. For one thing, we could change the state laws for not-for-profits—hospitals, universities—where New Labor often organizes. Often the boards of these "charities" are full of business people who hate labor. But a kindly Blue State could require that half the board be people with real backgrounds in charity. Nice people. Such a board would be kinder if a union tried to organize.

Or we could pass laws that let workers elect committees to make sure managers follow state safety codes and wage laws. And what about flex time? Let's have committees that make sure flex time is for real. No, the committees would not "bargain." But they could report violations to the state. And it would be a halfway house to starting a real union.

It's true, to keep people in a new kind of labor, we need to do

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a little bargaining for them. But what I have in mind, in a Blue State, is a new type of bargaining. It is not bargaining directly with the employer but lobbying to get benefits by passing laws in the state capitals. We can start off with some small things: paid maternity leave, severance pay and a little vacation.

Now, some will say, "Come on, the state governments are awful." And it's true, they are. But at least they have one person, one vote, unlike our federal government. That means, in a Blue State, with a simple majority, we have a shot at getting the law changed.

So that's what a new type of labor movement, in a Blue State, would do. It would give everyone a chance to be "part of labor." It would give us a new image. For example, every one of the counseling centers ought to have a name like "The Interfaith Center for Workplace Counseling." Find every priest, minister, rabbi, etc., and link them up to it.

We could start calling on clergy with the fervor of Karl Rove. Tell them, "Those people in the congregation, the fired, the laid off, we want you to refer them to us." (Now, that's something the right can't do for churches.)

But to bring back labor in the Blue States, we need more than a new kind of labor. With the old labor gone and with labor now so weak, the Democrats themselves may have to do what unions used to do. The Democrats will have to do our collective bargaining for us. I mean, not a party that tacitly supports a labor movement, but a party that *is* the labor movement. The Democrats have to be the SEIU, the Teamsters. And they can do this by passing laws to make employers pay us.

A small example of such a politics: Look at the last Kerry-Bush debate, when Bush was speechless (in a profounder way than usual). The moderator had asked about the minimum wage. Even for Bush, it was startling: *He had nothing to say*. Except to gape, mutter and then go: Education, education, education. Does anyone else remember this moment?

Every Democrat should. Play that tape back. They, the right, have nothing to say! They don't mind if we do tax bills, spending bills. But on minimum wage—no, there is never going to be a vote. They don't dare have a vote. Who wants to be on record against it?

And the minimum wage is nothing. That's just for the poor. The silence would be deafening if we pushed for wage-type benefits for people in the middle. For married people with kids, and the Christian right who follow Fox.

Here's what we should go for, if we govern from the Blue States. First, paid maternity leave for three months. Second, right to a vacation for seven days. And a right to four sick days, without being docked. Third, severance pay: one week for every year of work.

Oh, at the Heritage Foundation, they will scream. In the think tanks, they will have plenty to say. But not upfront, on TV, to the American moms. There, they dare not say a word.

Over and over about this last election, it was said: Democrats make these naked appeals to people's economic interests. But in the Kerry campaign, I never heard any such naked appeal. Yes, he talked "populist" talk. He railed at corporations. He probably said he was for unions. Al Gore did the same. People know in some vague and misty way that Democrats are for the "working people."

All that is true. But are the working people who vote for Bush

voting against their interests? Yes, to an extent they do not vote "rationally." But a vote for Kerry may or may not pay off. It's hard to say. It involves some fiddling with the trade or tax laws. It's unclear, at the end, which working people, if any, are better off. But a vote for the right or for Bush pays off now. It is a smash in the mouth. It pays off as a howl.

John Kennedy and the old Democrats did not have to be so direct. Labor could decode them. Kennedy could say, "I'm for labor," and people knew that by electing Kennedy, labor would turn that simple statement into cash. But now we have to be more explicit. We have to tell people in a simpler way: Here is how you get the dough.

We can try a new, direct approach, to help us govern in the Blue States. So we can begin with three months' paid maternity leave. Oh yes, be sure to say: We will give assistance to small business. Then maybe, after a while, go to paid maternity leave of four months. Same with vacation. Let's start with seven days. Then maybe go to ten.

And what will the GOP say, No? Let them say no. Let the Heritage Foundation scream. We want the screaming so loud, it wakes up people in the pews. Let the Republicans go to the voters and say no. Let's have a big, noisy battle in every one of the Blue States. I can hardly wait.

Over the years, the Democrats have become terrified to put anything in the platform, because the GOP will add up the numbers and say, "This will cost \$10 trillion." So, terrified, we put little in the platform. We think we're being smart. We aren't giving any targets. But it also means we have nothing to hand out. No maternity leave. No severance. No vacation. And that's why, if we start governing from the Blue States, we ought to do it with a platform: "Here's the minimum, here's what we want, in every state."

The idea is, we want to make ourselves a target. We want people in the Red States to see what we are doing. And if we start governing in the Blue States in this way, we'll begin to show people what they miss by living in the Red States: paid maternity leave, vacation time, family time.

Just to promise a direct payoff of this kind is a whole new way of appealing to people's economic interests. It is much, much more direct than anything the Democrats have ever tried.

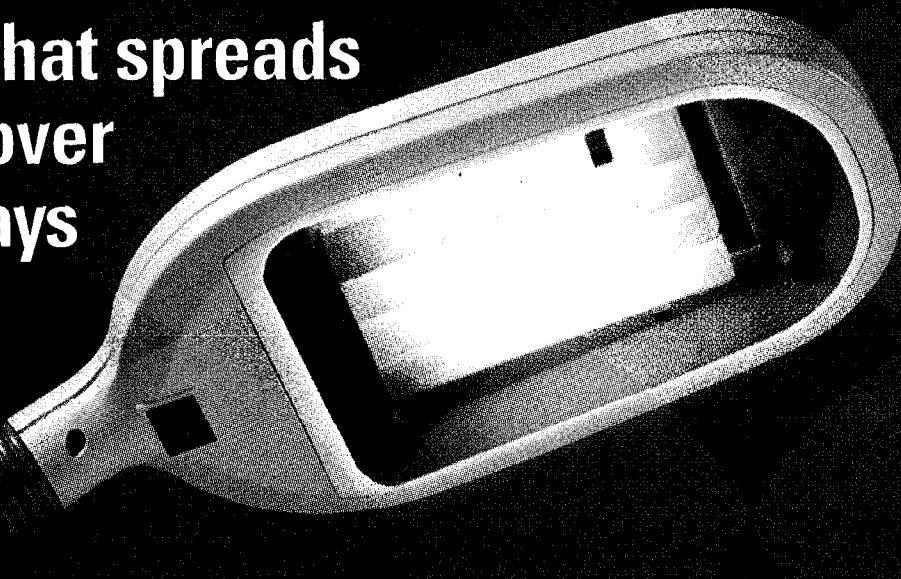
But it's not enough just to make the promise in a speech, or even to put it in a platform. From now on, whenever possible, we have to put these payoffs on the ballot. Let's plan, now, for 2006. In every Blue State, we should have each new benefit, separately, with a separate box, on the voter's Blue State ballot. Paid maternity leave. Paid vacation. Paid sick leave. Real severance pay.

I mean, shove it in people's faces. Yes, I know, some Bush voters in Florida voted for the minimum wage. But that was not self-interest, it was a gift for the poor. No, here's what I mean:

YES. I am voting for severance pay, for me. YES. I am voting for a right to a vacation, for me. YES, I am voting for paid maternity leave, for me. It might begin to dawn on more working people, as they keep checking off the boxes: YES, I must be a Democrat. I know, the Christian right did something similar, with gay marriage bans, to get their own base out in this election. But we need to do it, and not just to get "turnout." We need to do it pedagogically, to teach people: Wake up! You're a Democrat. And you have been all your life.

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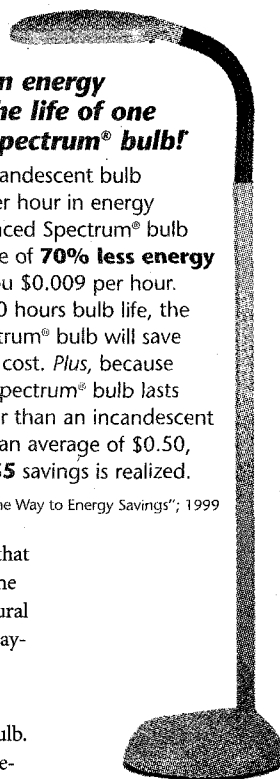
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*Source: "Lighting the Way to Energy Savings"; 1999



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Isn't it a little lopsided to govern from a few states, even if they are New York, California and a few others? Yes. But there are three payoffs for America. First, if we can build up union membership, just in the Blue States, then there is a bigger labor. And a bigger labor can fight more battles in the Red States. Second, if we can rule in the Blue States, we can show people in the Red States what they are missing out on. In my dreamier moments, I think we should recall the Democratic convention and write the kind of platform we should have had last summer.

Finally, it might teach us how to appeal to people's interests the next time we go out for the presidency, in 2008. Maybe we

will talk much more directly about putting money into people's pockets. Look at healthcare. Who except Paul Krugman could understand our program? Rather, it might be better if Kerry had just proposed: We'll pay people's deductibles, the first \$1,000 of coverage. Now it might be crude. But at least people could understand it.

Populism is well and good. But if our populism is complicated and mannered, we only waste our breath. If we are going to be populists, let's make it a lot simpler. Let's make it like Star Wars. And let's try it out in the Blue States, because we can't wait till '08. ■

Letter From Spain

by Samuel Loewenberg

Madrid

When she was 30, Mónica M. fled her violent husband, taking her two small children and only the clothes on her back. But leaving did not solve her problems. Stuck in the sludge of the patriarchal Spanish legal system, Mónica, who asked that her full name not be disclosed out of concern for her children's safety, struggled for four years to get a divorce. She had a restraining order against her husband, but he continued to stalk her, driving her from shelter to shelter and job to job. He repeatedly threatened her family. While her legal protections were few, he seemed to have many, including twice-a-week visitation rights with their children. Mónica says that at these times her 3-year-old daughter would become so scared she would wet herself. In August her 8-year-old son went on vacation with her ex-husband and returned with a broken arm. "I feel impotent. I haven't been protected at all, and neither have my children," says Mónica from the relative safety of a women's center located in an unmarked building in central Madrid. "I don't want to hide anymore. It's he who should be hiding."

For decades women like Mónica were expected to suffer in silence, ignored by a society and a legal system that did not acknowledge domestic violence. That's changing. Since sweeping into power in April, the newly elected Socialist government has been enacting an ambitious social reform agenda that will give new rights to women, homosexuals and immigrants, and will limit the role of the Catholic Church in public life. For this historically conservative country, which missed the Enlightenment and many of the social reforms of the twentieth century, what the Socialists are doing amounts to a revolution that is designed to leapfrog Spain to parity with the liberal countries of Northern Europe. That, along with the government's renewed foreign policy alliances with Germany and France, will put the new Spain well to the left of the United States.

In making these changes the Socialist-led government is up-setting centuries of traditional control by the Catholic Church

that were upheld through its alliance with Gen. Francisco Franco. The previous government, led by the conservative Popular Party, also a strong ally of the Church, was unexpectedly ousted in the wake of the March 11 terrorist bombings, which killed 192 people.

The new government marked its first success on October 7, when the first part of the reform package, a series of laws to combat violence against women, passed Parliament with a resounding majority. The laws not only increase the penalties for domestic violence but also shorten the time it takes to get a divorce from more than two years to less than six months. They also give more money to shelters; provide specialized training for judges, police, doctors and psychologists; and fund a public education campaign in the press and the schools.

The Popular Party initially opposed the domestic violence legislation on technical grounds, arguing that it was unconstitutional to have a law that protects only women while excluding other vulnerable populations such as children and senior citizens. But in the end, after it became apparent that Spain's smaller parties would back the legislation and insure its passage, the conservatives threw in their support. Next on the government's agenda are legalizing gay marriage, allowing gay couples to adopt children, abolishing Spain's restrictive abortion laws and reversing a policy of mandatory religious education in public schools.

Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, a self-described feminist, has appointed women to half of his Cabinet posts, and the Socialists say they want to pass a law requiring that at least 50 percent of the candidates on any electoral slate be female. The government even plans to overturn a longstanding prohibition against women being allowed to ascend to the throne of the Spanish monarchy. Particularly on the issue of gender, "the government is ahead of the society. It is trying to introduce an example that says, 'This is how we want the society to be,'" said Fernando Valle-spín, the president of the Center for Sociological Investigation, a government-funded think tank.

The Church, which is the seat of one of the most conservative Catholic establishments in the world, has vowed to fight the So-

Samuel Loewenberg is a writer based in Madrid.



cialists' new reforms, particularly the initiatives to legalize gay marriage and abortion. But with at least 60 percent of the Spanish public supporting the rights of homosexuals to marry, that's likely to be a losing battle. The Conference of Catholic Bishops has said it is the "moral obligation" of Catholic members of Parliament to oppose the marriage proposal, which it has described as being equivalent to "imposing a virus on society." It also says that legalizing abortion is "unthinkable." The Socialists say they will not only legalize gay marriage; they will legalize adoption by gay couples as well. "In our conception, it is impossible only to recognize a part of a person's rights, you have to recognize all of them," says Jordi Pedret, a Socialist member of the Parliamentary Committee on Judicial Affairs.

The gay-marriage laws will put Spain on a par with Belgium and the Netherlands, the only European countries so far to have legalized homosexual unions. The Bush Administration's support for banning gay marriage confounds gay activists here. "It is very surprising to me that the United States, which is a very important country in democracy, is trying to ban the expression of love of gay and lesbian people," says Miguel Ángel Sánchez Rodríguez, the president of the Triangle Foundation, a longtime gay rights organization in Madrid.

While the Church may not have the power it once did, it still receives special treatment from the government, including an annual subsidy of some \$150 million, a remnant of its alliance with Franco. For now, that government contribution will continue untouched, although in a sign of the Church's weakening power, the Socialists have announced the government will also give money to other religions, including Islam. The Church also suffered a hit when the Socialists announced they would stop mandatory religious education in the schools. "We live in a secular state," says Maria Virtudes Monteserín Rodríguez, the Socialist Party's spokesperson for women's rights. "The Church has its own opinions and we respect them, but in reality it's the Parliament that makes the law."

Some previously passed-over sectors of society are already feeling the benefits of the new government. In the last days of October the government announced it would grant work permits to hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants, many of them from Morocco.

Women have been waiting a long time for the new domestic-violence measures. The previous government essentially ignored the issue of battered women, just as much of Spanish society has done for decades, says Enriqueta Chicano Javega, president of the Progressive Women's Foundation in Madrid, who testified on behalf of the legislation at parliamentary hearings. Under the Franco regime domestic violence was dismissed as a "crime of passion," and women could not even have a bank account or travel without the permission of their husbands. Women gained some rights in the 1980s, like the ability to get divorced and have a salary, but, says Chicano, "the rest of society hasn't moved."

Nearly everybody acknowledges that incidents of domestic violence in Spain have reached crisis levels. More than 2 million women suffer abuse from their partners, and an estimated 97 percent do not complain to the authorities, according to Amnesty International. "There's a huge waiting list of people who need help," says Mónica López Rodríguez, a counselor at the center where Mónica M. is being sheltered. Many won't receive assist-

Downloadable audio files of talks and interviews with Bob Avakian are available on the Internet at the following site.

- "Elections, Democracy and Dictatorship, Resistance and Revolution"
- "Christianity and Society—The Old Testament, the New Testament, Christian Fascism, Social Change and Revolution"
- "Bob Avakian Speaks to the People: God Doesn't Exist — And We Need Liberation Without Gods"

This site also includes a link to an excerpt from Bob Avakian's interview with revolutionary journalist Michael Slate. This is the first of a series of excerpts from the interview, broadcast on L.A.'s KPFF show "Beneath the Surface" on September 7, 2004. Chairman Avakian speaks about the elections and the stakes of this moment.

Beyond the Shelter Wall Homeless Families Speak Out

By Ralph da Costa Nunez

Beyond the Shelter Wall gives readers a rare look at the other side of homelessness. At a time when family homelessness has reached an all-time high, these first-hand accounts provide insight and clarity into the growing epidemic of America's poorest.



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ance for three months or more, says López. Once or twice a week the newspapers splash tales of violence across their pages, such as that of a 76-year-old man who stabbed his wife to death or an 18-year-old who tortured his 15-year-old girlfriend. Already this year, fifty women have been murdered by their spouses or boyfriends.

Supporters of the new law emphasize that domestic violence should not be dismissed as a particular product of Spanish machismo. "This is a problem of chauvinist culture, but it's not only

here. It's happening in other European countries," says Montserratín. A recent survey by the EU found that despite their long histories of gender equality, some Northern European countries have rates of spousal abuse comparable to those of Spain. For Mónica M., who is now in counseling and trying to bring together other battered women to lobby the government to change the system, the domestic violence legislation is a ray of hope. "If it really is what they say it is, it's like a dream," she says. "It's fantastic." ■

EXCHANGE

C O N T I N U E D

(Continued From Page 2)

despite the interests and views of other nations." Unlike Lieven, who mistakes the Syrian or Iranian dictatorships as the representatives of the views of their nations, I have written often that US officials must listen precisely to the views of the people (not their oppressors) in these and other nations. Finally, Lieven's invocation of the "Israel lobby" as the sinister source behind all my ideas is just so distasteful that it deserves no response.

There are only two explanations for what Lieven has written. One is that his scholarship is just sloppy. An alternative explanation, though, is that Lieven cares little about the actual arguments and instead seeks to meddle in the internal affairs of the Democratic Party. For this British champion of state sovereignty, how ironic the second explanation would be. Of course, given my politics, I encourage external criticism of our internal politics. But mine is the very worldview that Lieven wants to eliminate from the Democratic Party.

MICHAEL MCFaul

LIEVEN REPLIES

Washington, DC

■ First of all, I must apologize if I unintentionally gave the impression that Michael Tomasky and Michael McFaul directly supported the decision to go to war in Iraq. As they have written, this was not the case. Equally, I am quite certain that McFaul never has and never would use a phrase like "the only language Arabs understand is force." As Seymour Hersh and others have pointed out, and as I know from my own experience, such language is indeed characteristic of professed democratizers on the neoconservative right. By contrast, McFaul and Tomasky are undoubtedly entirely sincere in their commitment to the universal values of democracy.

My point regarding their work, however, was, or was intended to be, a different one: that the writings of McFaul, Tomasky and other "liberal hawks" have contributed to an intellectual and ideological atmosphere in this country that gave space for some of the key arguments used to justify the war. In this atmosphere, it is widely accepted that America has the universal right, duty and ability to spread what it defines as "democracy" and "freedom"—irrespective of local conditions, of local wishes and of an American historical record in various parts of the world that quite rightly makes local people

extremely skeptical of American bona fides and benevolence (and incidentally, I must say as a British citizen that the records of the British, French and other Europeans have been much worse in this regard). The atmosphere I have described contributes to a national arrogance that was all too apparent in the run-up to the Iraq war, when cogent criticisms from well-meaning and pro-American foreigners were too often dismissed out of hand as illegitimate—often by liberal commentators.

I am afraid that the passages I quoted from Tomasky and McFaul do indeed manifestly point in that direction. On that score, McFaul's use of the word "meddle" concerning my recommendations to the Democratic Party is rather revealing. From my point of view, he is more than welcome to write an essay for a British publication arguing that my views are incompatible with liberal values and that I should be thrown out of the British Liberal Democratic Party, as part of a general move to change that party's approach to international affairs. I would of course disagree with him, and would argue strongly against this fate. But I would not accuse him of "meddling." As the free citizen of a fellow democracy, he is free to write whatever he pleases in the British press, as long as it appears openly and can be openly answered. The same is true of Paul Berman, who has not chosen to exercise this right.

On the wider issue of democratization: To preach democracy while displaying indifference or even contempt toward the views of large majorities of those peoples you want to democratize is extremely contradictory, and is seen to be so by the targets of your professed benevolence. I am afraid that McFaul's record with regard to the views of ordinary Russians concerning "liberal" reforms in Russia has often formed part of this melancholy pattern. Far from helping to democratize Russia, this kind of approach, combined with the disastrous results of the reforms themselves, has contributed to a situation in which "democracy" has become a dirty word for most ordinary Russians, and helped produce mass support for the present authoritarian reaction.

As the Russian example demonstrates, blind faith in America's democratizing mission can help create a cover for ruthless oligarchical regimes, which under a mask of democracy

plunder their own peoples. At worst, as in the case of Iraq, it can help justify aggressive war, launched in defiance of the wishes of a majority of the people of the region and motivated in large part by agendas that have nothing to do with spreading democracy and may well be contrary to that goal.

The repetition of "democracy" and "freedom" as mantras by the Bush Administration was intended to close down serious public debate on whether to go to war with Iraq, and to an alarming extent actually succeeded in doing so. The responsibility, however, lies not only with the Administration but with all those who have made this success possible by an unreflective use of these terms.

Tomasky asks, fairly enough, for an account of my own positive beliefs and wishes for US policy. I hope to have the chance to set these out more fully on a future occasion, but very briefly: The chief formative American influences on my approach to international affairs have been Reinhold Niebuhr, George Kennan and William Fulbright, proponents of a form of ethical realism, committed to resist aggression and totalitarianism but conscious of the West's flaws and historical crimes and concerned to spread our model chiefly by the force of our successful example.

In the context of US strategy in the Muslim world, I believe this dictates a ruthless battle against the aggressive barbarism and fanaticism of Al Qaeda and its allies. However, this is a battle that must be conducted chiefly by Muslims themselves, though with our support. To enlist their help requires not preaching democracy at them while pursuing policies they detest but heeding their opinions and vital interests and assisting in the social and economic development of their region.

In particular, to preach democracy to the Arab world while failing to bring American pressure to bear on Israel concerning its policies in the occupied territories helps render our democratic professions ludicrous in the eyes of most Arabs. The failure of many would-be democratizers even to discuss this issue in public is also a very poor advertisement for Western democracy. Finally, any push for democratization, whether of Arab countries or Iran, must be accompanied by some public recognition or at least awareness of all the

(Continued on Page 36)

COMMENT

(Continued From Page 7)

weeks of this campaign," Turner said, "and what we showed was, people can overcome money when people are willing to set aside their differences and have open and honest conversations."

CHRISTOPHER LISOTTA

Christopher Lisotta, senior reporter for Television Week, also writes for The Advocate and LA Weekly.

After Arafat

Ramallah

My first reaction is: God bless his soul," answered George W. Bush when asked to comment on the news that Yasir Arafat had "passed away." The obituary was premature. The Palestinian leader had not died, though as I write this, few doubt that the end is near. It is unclear whether Arafat's death will bring his people and the region closer to Bush's wish, "a free Palestinian state that's at peace with Israel."

Palestinians in the occupied territories have met their leader's sudden mortality with stoicism. There are no mass vigils outside his battle-scarred headquarters in Ramallah, no mass displays of grief. Most people are getting on with the routine of their lives—or what passes for routine in the garrison realities of the West Bank and Gaza. But there is fear over what will come after him.

Mechanisms for a peaceful transition are theoretically in place. Should Arafat die, the current speaker of the Palestinian Parliament, Rawhi Fattouh, would become president of the Palestinian Authority until new elections are held (within sixty days, according to the law), with the most likely candidate being the present Prime Minister, Ahmed Qurei (*a k a* Abu Ala). Chairmanship of the Palestine Liberation Organization would probably pass to its current general secretary and the former prime minister, Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen). In practice, too, the two men have already taken up the reins of power, with Abbas stepping in for Arafat in the PLO bodies and Qurei in the PA. The bigger question is whether a leadership with these two at the helm could govern in a post-Arafat era.

For now the answer is yes, says Palestinian labor minister and analyst Ghassan Khatib. Abbas and Qurei are "accepted by everyone or at least could be accepted by everyone." But, he adds, their true mettle will be tested when and if they attempt to make strategic decisions over reform, the intifada and the peace process. On reform they will likely face obstruction from the "old guard" Fatah leadership, particularly the heads of the unpopular PA security forces, who rightly see the end of the Arafat era as a prelude to their own, and would resist any diminution of their power. In the worst case this could mean the collapse of the security forces into *de facto* militias, grouped around locale, patronage and this or that security warlord. The disintegration, marked by occasional kidnappings and armed confrontations, is already evident. In Gaza, forces loyal to the former PA security minister, Muhammad Dahlan, routinely clash with the PA's national security forces, headed by Arafat's nephew, Musa.

Another challenge could come from militias like the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades. Some of these have already formed tactical al-

liances with security-force warlords like Dahlan or with outside powers, like the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah. On November 1 a Palestinian suicide bomber killed three Israelis in Tel Aviv. Claiming responsibility, a militia linked to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine warned "Palestinian elements" (Abbas and Qurei) not to end the "armed intifada." Nor is it clear what stance the Islamists of Hamas and Islamic Jihad will take to the new order. In response to Arafat's illness, they've urged a united Palestinian leadership made up of all the factions, to be followed by new elections—a demand viewed as the height of responsibility by some, the height of opportunism by others.

The desire for unity through new local, parliamentary and presidential elections is nonetheless a sentiment shared by the vast majority of Palestinians as well as most of Palestine's secular political and civic organizations, says Mustafa Barghouthi, whose National Democratic Initiative has championed democratic reform as the only way to resolve the crisis of Palestinian leadership. "I think we are at a crossroads," says Barghouthi. "Israel and the United States can try to impose a leadership on us, or it can deal with us as an authentic national movement with an elected leadership. All I can tell you is that the first way won't work."

It is almost certain that Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon won't take the second path. For most Palestinians, the main purpose of his separation plan—including his plan to "disengage" soldiers and settlers from most of Gaza as well as the imposition of new "defensible borders" through the establishment of the West Bank wall—is to prevent the re-emergence of any national Palestinian authority, let alone an elected one. For the past year Bush has supported him in these unilateralist designs. But in his last Administration there were some who would have preferred the disengagement plan to have been negotiated with the PA, if only to prevent the specter of a Hamas takeover in Gaza, where the Islamist movement is especially strong. Would an Abbas and Qurei leadership change Bush's unilateralist preference?

It should, say Palestinian analysts, if the United States is interested in strengthening what remains of the moderate wing of Palestinian nationalism. First, a "coordinated" withdrawal from Gaza would give weight to what is likely to be Abbas and Qurei's initial policy initiative: a reciprocal cease-fire in which the Palestinians hold their fire for the duration of the Gaza pullout in return for Israel ending its policies of incursions and assassinations. Second, a cease-fire in Gaza—combined with Israeli pull-back from the reconquered West Bank cities—would enable elections to take place, a condition many see as indispensable if Abbas and Qurei are to consolidate popular legitimacy in the teeth of their opponents in Fatah and the other Palestinian factions. "Elections are the only way a smooth transition will happen. Even Arafat had to be elected when he returned to Palestine [after the Oslo Accords]. Abbas and Qurei will not be able to lead without them," says analyst Mamdour Nofal. He also knows that elections have little to do with when Arafat dies. They have much more to do with what Sharon does in the occupied territories and what Bush decides—as opposed to wishes—in Washington.

GRAHAM USHER

Graham Usher is Palestine correspondent for The Economist and Middle East International.

JONATHAN SCHELL

Strange Mandate

A remarkable number of those in Blue America who hoped for an end to the Bush era on November 2 received the news of his election victory almost as if it had been a physical blow. Some compared it to a kick in the stomach, others to a sudden illness. Many dreaded the outcome so deeply that they were unable to watch the returns come in. One person, Andrew Veal, traveled to Ground Zero, somehow penetrated the security fence that rings the site and shot himself at the base of the World Trade Center—in part, reports have said, in protest against the election. And before the vote it had been a commonplace to say that it was the most important election of our lifetimes.

There was, of course, a long list of specific reasons for the sharp reaction, including the war launched on the basis of phony evidence, the blizzard of legal memos exempting the executive branch from the law and condoning torture, the widespread torture itself, the deep shroud of secrecy dropped over the presidency, the claim that the President could lock away any person, American citizen or other, on his own say-so as Commander in Chief, the tax bonanza for the super-rich, the phony economic math that had sent the budget deficit soaring, the blindness to environmental disaster. But at least as disturbing as any of these particular blunders and abuses was the across-the-board rejection of accountability for any of them.

The President and his Vice President appeared to be temperamentally incapable of admitting any mistake. Nor were the other branches of government, conceived by the Founders as checks and balances, performing that office (the main exception being the Supreme Court ruling against the Administration's suspensions of habeas corpus). The Fourth Estate had, until very recently, abdicated its role as thoroughly as the other three. Even the international community was passive—failing, in this case, to provide that balance of power that has been the classic response of nations to hegemonic threats. If pursued to their logical conclusion, these tendencies added up to more than the sum of their parts. They evoked a terrifying vision of a systemic change, possibly irreversible, of the American democratic system into a one-party system dominated by a President who had placed himself above the law or any other control.

But one large and obvious barricade to any realization of this nightmare remained in place: the electoral system. Perhaps the people—the ultimate check, the ultimate balance—would rise up to say no to torture, no to aggressive war, no to a lawless presidency, no to empire, and impose the accountability that the other elements of the system had failed to provide and throw Bush out of office. Instead the people—or 51 percent of the voters, if the counters are correct—in effect looked on these things and called them good. It is true that the public may have been ill informed about such matters as weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and also true that 51 percent of the voters do not constitute a majority of the *people* of the United States. Yet the fact remains that the public has given George W. Bush the most important expression of support that the Constitution provides for—a majority of the votes cast in a high-turnout election. (Some writers have sug-

gested that some of the results may be fraudulent. But these charges, which of course deserve a thorough airing, have not been proven so far.)

For a believer in democracy, this sequence of events creates an acute quandary. The decision of a majority, the sole source of legitimacy that a democracy can confer, deserves respect. American Blues should honor it exactly as much as they would expect the Reds to have honored a Kerry mandate. Also, those Red voters, or some of them, are exactly the people who offer the sole available path out of today's nightmare, which is to say the formation of a different electoral majority with a different will.

If regarded very narrowly, the creation of a popular mandate for a President who had never had one (because he lost the popular vote in 2000 and got into office with a vote of the Supreme Court) even has certain positive aspects. They were perhaps visible in the press conference that the President gave almost immediately after his victory. The flailing Bush of the campaign debates was gone. He seemed older, calmer, even more contented than he had ever seemed before. A President governing with the support of most of his fellow citizens: Isn't this what democracy is all about?

And yet a nightmare doesn't become a beautiful dream just because it has just been given a mandate; on the contrary, it becomes more frightening. Just how frightening became almost immediately clear when the President, in one of the most shameful acts of recent American history, ordered the attack upon the city of Falluja, beginning with an assault on a hospital, whose patients were for a while herded into halls and tied up. For Bush, in addition to being President of the United States, had made himself the dictator of Iraq. He came to democratize the country, but so far Iraq has dictatorized him. He has added himself to the company of despots that rule in almost all Middle Eastern nations. (Of course, it's all being done in the name of democracy someday in the future. I am reminded of what Gandhi said of Stalin in 1938: "He dreams of peace, and dreams he will wade to it through a sea of blood.")

What has produced the peculiar combination of intellectual disorientation and moral nausea among so many people is at least in part, I suggest, a fear that the democratic will of a people has become the adversary of democracy, that the country is entering into a *legitimized nightmare*. Can a great democracy vote itself out of existence? How does a true *democrat* act in such a circumstance? Perhaps anxiety of this kind was the tacit reason that some people were referring to the "Armageddon election."

And yet, of course, on November 3, the sun rose, the coffee smelled good, the Internet was up and the Constitution remained in operation. There was still time to think and act.

Jonathan Schell, the Harold Willens Peace Fellow at The Nation Institute, is the author of The Unconquerable World: Power, Nonviolence, and the Will of the People and A Hole in the World, a compilation of his "Letter From Ground Zero" columns.

BOOKS & THE ARTS

Masters of Their Universe

IRA BERLIN

**LANDON CARTER'S UNEASY KINGDOM:
Revolution and Rebellion on a Virginia
Plantation.**

By Rhys Isaac.

Oxford. 423 pp. \$35.

**MASTERY, TYRANNY, AND DESIRE:
Thomas Thistlewood and His Slaves
in the Anglo-Jamaican World.**

By Trevor Burnard.

North Carolina. 320 pp. Paper \$19.95.

Beginning in the fifteenth century, Africa, Europe and the Americas came together in the Atlantic to create new economies, new cultures and new societies. At the center of those societies was the plantation, a radically new unit of production that employed slave labor to grow exotic commodities for sale in distant markets. Atop the plantation strode a new class, men of enormous wealth and power, who—with good reason—preferred the title “master.” For the next 400 years, they were masters of the universe.

The masters’ rule extended to all corners of the Atlantic world. The shadow that their great houses cast over nearby slave cabins reached as far as the distant metropolises, so that few were untouched by the planters’ enormous presence. During the past three decades historians have unraveled much of the history of what Eugene Genovese once called “the world the slaveholders made.” Of late, historians have focused on the subalterns of the plantation world: slaves, free people of color, white nonslaveholders and even plantation mistresses. Perhaps spurred by the era of Republican dominance and a reassertive ruling class, historians have given new attention to the plantocracy.

Of course, there have been numerous studies of the planter class, as well as biographies of individual planters. However,

Ira Berlin, a professor of history at the University of Maryland, is the author, most recently, of Generations of Captivity: A History of African-American Slaves (Belknap).

they have produced little agreement as to its character. The result is a farrago of contradictory ideas, with visions of seigniorial patriarchs dueling with notions of upward-striving capitalists. On the one hand, planters have been depicted as perennial hotspurs—hard drinking, fast-living men whose hair-trigger tempers demonstrated little foresight and generated even less systematic thought. On the other hand, they have been portrayed as cultivated gentlemen, caring stewards whose hospitality became famous and whose book-lined drawing rooms oozed great ideas. The planters’ residence amid black slaves and their consequent fear of enslavement, according to some historians, bred a fierce independence that made planters into great apostles of liberty, if only for white men. One famously wrote that “all men are created equal.” Rejecting the idea that slavery was

The slave masters’ rule extended to all corners of the Atlantic world, and few were untouched by the enormous power they wielded.

the great leveler, others have seen planters as hidebound aristocrats, and their commitment to chattel bondage as a prop for traditional hierarchies.

A plethora of new studies of the plantocracy offers an opportunity to revisit these masters of the universe. Two of the best are Rhys Isaac’s *Landon Carter’s Uneasy Kingdom: Revolution and Rebellion on a Virginia Plantation* and Trevor Burnard’s *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and His Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World*. Each offers fresh insights into the character of the plantocracy and its evolution. Because they draw upon two different slave societies and address men of such different temperaments, they provide an opportunity to think broadly about the plantocracy.

Carter and Thistlewood presided over slave plantations at the pinnacle of the planters’ 400-year reign, the mid-eighteenth cen-

tury. They received—as they expected—the full measure of wealth, privilege and respect due their place. Indeed, in many ways, they represented the finest attributes of the planter class, its driving ambition, commitment to human advancement (for whites, at least) and willingness to take responsibility for the world it had created.

Planters believed they represented the best, not merely for themselves but also for those they governed. For the most part, they were learned men, knowledgeable in letters and science. Carter read deeply in the literature of antiquity—naturally in the original Greek and Latin—as well as in the new novels of sentiment. He named his home plantation Sabine Hall and constructed one of the great libraries in colonial America. Thistlewood's taste ran toward science, although the works of Milton and Pope found their way onto his bookshelf. Both men were devoted to the ideas of the Enlightenment. As compulsive improvers, they perused agricultural journals for more productive seeds and bettered their herds with blooded stock. They introduced new techniques to their plantations, reorganizing work routines in a manner that would make Frederick Taylor proud. As David Brion Davis long ago noted, the plantation represented not the encrusted sloth of the ancient regime but the sleek efficiency of the nascent capitalist order. Carter and Thistlewood, each in his own way, were cheerleaders of human progress.

Both men exhibited intelligence, shrewd judgment and, when challenged, admirable courage. Carter condemned the “Byg Men” who ran Virginia's legislature as their personal fiefdom, refusing to partake in the corruption that passed for business as usual. Thistlewood, for his part, staked his independence from the great sugar magnates who dominated Jamaican society. To their dismay, they learned he was not a man with whom they could trifle. If independence of mind and love of liberty were prized ideals in the eighteenth century—as well as our own—it would be hard to find better exemplars.

Yet the perversities of slave society bent these otherwise commendable traits into heinous pathologies. Enjoying a monopoly of violence and knowing their own success rested on a willingness to employ it without compunction, the planters became twisted personifications of the tyranny they professed to despise. Carter became, at best, a dyspeptic curmudgeon, obsessed with his failed patriarchy; Thistlewood, a monstrous sociopath. But as Isaac and Burnard

underscore, the real price was paid by the men and women who fell under the planters' rule.

Landon Carter and Thomas Thistlewood shared much as members of the planter class, but it is hard to imagine two more different individuals. The distinction derived, in large measure, from differences between eighteenth-century Virginia and Jamaica, but the diverse personalities of

While singing the praises of liberty and independence, planters became twisted personifications of the tyranny they professed to despise.

men of radically different origins magnified those distinctions.

Landon Carter was born into the immense privilege of Virginia's first families in 1710. The son of Robert “King” Carter, perhaps the richest man in the colony, he was educated by tutors at home and then, at age 9, sent to study in London. He returned eight years later to nurse his aged father and, when the old man died, the young Carter inherited his portion of the family estate. In the years that followed, Landon expanded his patrimony, so that eventually his domain became a small empire that reached into all corners of the Chesapeake and numbered some 400 slaves.

Like other grantees, Carter married into another prominent Virginia family (the Wormeleys). When his first wife died, he picked a second from another of Virginia's first families (the Byrds), and when she died he did so yet again (this time a Beale). As he formed and re-formed his domestic life, Carter entered Virginia politics. Like most of the gentlemen of his class, Carter despised the hurly-burly of an electoral system that forced him to appeal for the votes of dirt farmers, whom he held in utter contempt. But he did what was necessary and eventually won a seat in the Virginia General Assembly. He became an early and strong advocate of colonial rights and a minor figure in the struggle for American independence. Along the way Carter kept a diary, which Isaac—whose earlier study of eighteenth-century Virginia won a Pulitzer Prize—suggests might be hailed as a “literary classic,” if only it had been a work of fiction. As history, sadly, it is only another source for the study of the past.

Isaac's praise is perhaps a bit too fulsome, but there is no doubt about the importance of Landon Carter's diary as a window on the planter class and Carter himself. It reveals a man who saw himself as a link in the long chain of patriarchy, whose his-

tory stretched back to time immemorial. For Carter, as for many members of his class, the patriarchal ideal justified his place in society, rationalized his actions and gave meaning to his life. As the father of “his people”—which included his slaves as well as his immediate family—he offered care and protection in return for deference, obedience and service, even if they had to be extracted by force. Unfortunately for Carter, he arrived at the pinnacle of patriarchal authority at the moment the ancient order of the ruling fathers was being undermined by the forces of modernity, not simply in the world at large but in his own household. Perhaps even

more disturbing for Carter, he half-wittingly joined in the assault, cutting the ground from under his feet. His was, as Isaac declares, an “uneasy kingdom.”

Carter's frustrations were played out in every corner of his domain. Carter considered himself an affectionate husband, a loving father to his children, a devoted master to his slaves and—when he obtained public office—a dutiful leader. Yet his efforts were for naught. Carter lived surrounded by unruly ingrates, who continually sabotaged his attempts to do right by them and himself. Although his various wives seemed to have been silently submissive, his children constantly challenged his best efforts, disregarding his advice and dismissing his authority. His son would have no part of his father's disciplined world of work and study, and instead gambled, whored and drank to excess. Like Carter's daughter, he married against his father's wishes, and when Carter half-heartedly threatened to disinherit both of them, they and their spouses rebuked him in a most cutting manner. Carter's grandson picked up on his parents' disdain and mocked his grandfather. When Carter cuffed the disrespectful brat, his daughter-in-law viciously tongue-lashed the old man.

Carter similarly found that his authority carried little weight with his slaves. Wielding the lash, Carter could force them to work. The lash was ubiquitous on his plantation. According to Isaac, the Carter diary is a catalogue of violence reported in the most routine, offhand manner. “They have been severely whiplashed day by day,” reads one unaffected entry, as Carter hurries to the more important matter of manuring. Still, his “people” stubbornly rejected his rule. At every opportunity, they challenged him—malingering, breaking tools, plundering the storehouse and then selling the booty for their own benefit. They took to the woods—in effect, striking—when their

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labor was needed most. When the Revolution provided an opening, key members of his enslaved workforce abandoned him for British lines, making it clear that they too regarded his putative fatherhood as a sham.

For Carter, the traitors to patriarchal rule were everywhere. His inability to bend his "children" to his will left him in a chronic state of dissatisfaction. The cantankerous patriarch spent endless hours pouring "indignant stories of disobedience" onto the pages of his diary. Isaac rightly calls it a narrative of subversion.

The ultimate failure of Carter's patriarchal rule came not at the hand of traitors within his household but from his own hand, and Isaac documents the delicious irony in fine detail. A jealous guardian of his liberties and those of his class, Carter became an early and ardent defender of American rights against the imposition of Crown tyranny. Slowly he was drawn into the growing opposition and finally into open rebellion against the monarchy, the very model of patriarchal rule that he so cherished. Even as he denounced the King and his ministers, he fulminated against the antimonarchical and regicidal impulse of the emerging republicanism. Landon Carter came to understand that he was "Sabine Hall's George III."

The parallels between the struggle within Carter's household and those within the British Empire can be easily overdrawn into a vast psychodrama. But Isaac is too good a historian to detach Carter's predicament from the material and ideological realities of the revolutionary crisis. In arguing "the symbolic pulling down of patriarchal monarchy as the keystone of the cosmic arch of public and private authority," Isaac appreciates that patriarchy withstood that blow and the many that followed. With American independence, the father King was quickly replaced by the Founding Fathers. Still, Isaac's larger point that the Revolution was a central event in the decline of patriarchy is incontrovertible.

As Carter's world deteriorated under assault from his children, his slaves and his own antimonarchical politics, he compensated for his double loss—his own and the King's—by turning the full weight of his patriarchal energies on Nassaw, his personal attendant and most intimate companion. He "formed now a great project of redeeming Nassaw from the fires of hell." Isaac's rendition of the struggle between Carter and Nassaw is nothing short of brilliant, for it demonstrates in close detail the havoc patriarchy wreaked upon its subjects. A man of considerable parts, Nassaw was a healer

of great skill. Carter, who regularly doctored his people, had enormous respect for Nassaw's ability as a physician, for, in truth, Nassaw was one of the finest surgeons in colonial Virginia. Carter's determination to save Nassaw from the bottle was more than matched by Nassaw's powerful resolve. The struggle was intense. Carter had Nassaw "tied Neck & heels all night" and threatened to "send him to some of the islands." Nassaw petitioned, prayed and promised, but the requisite change was not forthcoming.

One planter invented a torture in which a slave defecated into the mouth of another, who was then gagged.

ing. Again Carter whipped, and Nassaw gave "the solemn Promise." When Nassaw's pledges came to nothing, Carter—certain that he was "justified both to God and man"—pressed ever harder. Although Nassaw survived, the old doctor paid an extraordinary price. As Isaac concludes, "the social and psychological cost...to Nassaw would never be reckoned."

Those who lived in the shadow of Thomas Thistlewood also suffered, and the price they paid was far higher than anything Nassaw and his compatriots endured. Thistlewood's diary is an extraordinary document, not merely because it reports two of the great events in Jamaican history—Tackey's revolt in 1760 and the great hurricane twenty years later—but because of its extensive account of the daily life of a middle-sized planter. While it provides none of the self-conscious moralizing and endless rationalizations that can be found in Carter's journal, it offers concrete evidence of a planter's behavior and—by extension—beliefs. Burnard, who teaches at England's Brunel University, employs it brilliantly to penetrate the mind of a man of unfathomable complexity.

Unlike Landon Carter, Thomas Thistlewood was born with no silver spoon. The son of an English tenant farmer, he received a good education and little else in the Lincolnshire community where he grew to manhood. Unable to duplicate his father's meager achievement, Thistlewood doubtless would have remained a struggling member of the struggling class had it not been for the opportunities afforded by the rise of the plantation. Burnard demonstrates how the growth of slavery was a godsend for ambitious Englishmen of the middling sort. Arriving in Jamaica in 1750 at age 29, this "foot soldier of imperialism" began his up-

ward climb through the ranks of overseers and petty slaveholders to become the owner of a small "pen," a Jamaican designation for an estate for raising livestock.

Thistlewood became a significant figure in his corner of Jamaica. He held a commission in the parish constabulary and was a magistrate of the local court. In time, he ranked in the top fifth of Jamaican planters in wealth. Thistlewood's extraordinary garden became a showcase for visitors to Jamaica, and his reputation as a horticulturalist spread beyond the island. While Thistlewood neither enjoyed Carter's extraordinary wealth nor gained his great eminence, at his death in 1786 he had achieved every bit of the success and recognition he desired.

The differences between Carter and Thistlewood were more than degrees of wealth and status. They reveal the stark differences between slavery in Jamaica and Virginia and consequent differences between the planters of the islands and mainland. Within days of Thistlewood's arrival, he witnessed a slaveholder severely whipping a runaway and then rubbing pepper, salt and lime juice into the open wound. When an unfortunate fugitive died, the planter cut off his head, stuck it on a pole and burned the body. Two weeks later Thistlewood watched some 300 lashes laid on a mulatto overseer "for his many crimes and negligences." Another slave was "hang'd upon ye 1st tree immediately ([for] drawing his knife upon a White Man) his hand cutt off, Body left unbury'd."

A quick study of planter rule, Thistlewood was soon wielding the whip with the best of Jamaica's plantocracy. Not content with the conventional mechanisms of terror, he invented his own gruesome tortures, such as the Derby's dose, in which one slave defecated into the mouth of another, who was then gagged. Thistlewood "Picketted Douglas' Coobah on a quart bottle neck, till she begged hard," and punished his slaves by forcing them to urinate into one another's mouths. It did not take long for Thistlewood to become a most inventive sadist.

Thistlewood also learned that his white skin gave him unimpeded access to black women, and he quickly took advantage of his prerogative. During his first year in Jamaica, he slept with thirteen black women on fifty-nine occasions, keeping track of who, when, where and how with great precision. In the nearly forty years that followed, Thistlewood would have sex with 138 women—nearly all of them black slaves—3,852 times, according to his own

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obsessive accounting. While he was a man of substantial—although, Burnard insists, not inordinate—sexual appetites, Thistlewood's sexual predation was not merely a means to satisfy his desires. He employed rape to demonstrate his absolute dominance by demoralizing his slaves and destabilizing slave society. Although he attempted to prostitute his victims by sometimes paying them small sums, rejecting Thistlewood's advances was not a realistic option for these women or those who dared protect them.

Thistlewood ruled by unmediated force, awing slaves with what Burnard calls "fierce, arbitrary, and instantaneous vio-

lence." Beyond their subordination, he cared little about their lives. He evinced no interest in the patriarchal ideology that drove Landon Carter. Carter's attempt to reform a slave drunkard would be inconceivable on Thistlewood's pen. While Carter desired to incorporate his slaves into his larger family, Thistlewood simply wrote his slaves out of the social contract. As Burnard notes, Thistlewood was not a racist of the scientific sort who condemned black people as biologically inferior. He lived and worked closely with slaves. He knew them as men and women. He appreciated differences in their abilities and personalities and em-

ployed those distinctions for his own purposes. However, he believed his rule could only be secured by mind-boggling terror.

Burnard exposes the monstrous results of Thistlewood's rule, but he also notes the ironies. Thistlewood's vicious physical assaults insulated his slaves from the kinds of psychological imposition of Carter's patriarchal regime. Thistlewood allowed slaves their own family and religious lives to the extent they could establish them within his regime. His slaves were freed from the kinds of imposition that made Nassaw's life a living hell. Thistlewood's slaves enjoyed a measure of independence Nassaw might have envied. Again ironically, while Thistlewood rarely entered into his slaves' lives, he himself became part of a slave family.

Early in his stay in Jamaica, Thistlewood established a lifelong relationship—some thirty-three years—with his slave housekeeper, Phibbah, although he continued to force himself upon other women. Together they had a son, and upon his death he granted Phibbah her freedom. If Thistlewood ever showed affection for another human being, it was for Phibbah. Phibbah used her relationship with Thistlewood to her own advantage and that of the larger slave community, but she also appeared to have deep affection for Thistlewood. When they were apart, Thistlewood noted—perhaps projecting his own feelings—that she was in "miserable slavery."

The relationship of Phibbah and Thistlewood, like that of Carter and Nassaw, demonstrates the difficulty of penetrating the mind of the master. Historians—Isaac and Burnard among them—have explained these divergent styles of mastership from the extraordinary differences of the demography and economy of a sugar island like Jamaica and a mainland colony like Virginia. Where slave masters lived surrounded by an overwhelming black majority—some 95 percent of the population in Thistlewood's portion of the island—whose numbers were constantly augmented by newly arrived Africans, planters believed that only raw terror could sustain their rule. In Virginia, a white majority and an African-American population allowed for other strategies. But Isaac's and Burnard's close reading of the diaries of Carter and Thistlewood make it evident that there is more involved than these structural differences.

Yet emphasizing Carter's struggle with his fellow physician and intimate companion and Thistlewood's relationship with his lifelong mistress also has its dangers.

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While much of the masters' lives is revealed in these telling relationships (and those of other slaves who lived and worked in close proximity to their owners), Carter and Thistlewood did not know most of their slaves, perhaps in part because their slaves did not want to be known. As Burnard emphasizes, slaves might find real rewards in living close to their owners—if only because it saved them from the harsh, often killing, regimen of field labor—but there were dangers too. Many slaves found it the better part of wisdom to keep their distance and take their chances in the fields.

Most, of course, did not have a choice. These anonymous men and women shaped the masters' world as much as the Nassaws and the Phibbahs.

Rhys Isaac's penetrating interpretation of Landon Carter and Trevor Burnard's extraordinarily thoughtful rendering of Thomas Thistlewood suggest how much more is to be learned about those who ruled the universe in the age of the plantation. The planters' achievement in expanding wealth and creating new polities has been rightly acknowledged; their legacy of inhumanity remains to be addressed. ■

2004 Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize

*The Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize of \$25,000, awarded annually for the most outstanding book of poems published in the United States by an American, is administered mutually by the Academy of American Poets and The Nation. In the past decade, winners have been Eamon Grennan (2003), Madeline DeFrees (2002), Fanny Howe (2001), David Ferry (2000), Wanda Coleman (1999), Mark Jarman (1998), Robert Pinsky (1997), Charles Wright (1996), Marilyn Hacker (1995), W.S. Merwin (1994), Thom Gunn (1993) and Adrienne Rich (1992). This year the award goes to Donald Revell for his *My Mojave* (Alice James). Jurors were Forrest Gander, Harryette Mullen and Brenda Hillman, who contributed the following essay. Other finalists for the award were *Blue Hour*, by Carolyn Forché (HarperCollins); *The Blaze of the Pouli*, by Mark McMorris (Georgia); *Otherhood*, by Reginald Shepherd (Pittsburgh); and *Blindsight*, by Rosmarie Waldrop (New Directions).*

The tasks of poetry have never been more important or more difficult than they are now. Recently I heard a well-known poet tell an audience that there aren't more readers for contemporary poetry because early-twentieth-century Modernist poets ruined it for us. That included, he said, Eliot, Stevens, Pound and Stein. I felt sorry for that poet. Poetry is an art that has always rendered mysterious matters in powerfully compressed ways (he could have told the audience) and even though readers of poetry are fewer relative to those of fiction and nonfiction, they are growing steadily in number. The number of fine independent presses—Apogee, Flood Editions, Omnidawn and Tender Buttons, to name just a few—is growing healthily as well. It is not the fault of poetry that reading the work of our finest poets takes patience; poets tell of the mind in time, and our culture privileges speedy activities. We are reminded by Shelley that poets are supposed to be radically aware of their duty as the nerves of

cultures, that poetry is peculiarly equipped to bring the inner and outer worlds together, to rehabilitate modes of perception that have been undermined by an aggressively non-contemplative society. We need poetry more than ever.

Here is a poem by Donald Revell, called "To the Destroyers of Ballots":

For his cancer
My dog drinks
A wild tea
Of fallen leaves
In standing water

But this morning
We found ice
And underneath it
Nothing to drink
Only brittle leaves

No birds today
Except hawks keeping
A brown watch
Over no prey
Man and dog

a debate on the future of OUTSOURCING

The Nation VS. The Economist

William Greider

National Affairs

Correspondent, *The Nation*

and **Lori Wallach**,

Executive Director,

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vs.

Clive Crook,

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The piece is from his extraordinary book *My Mojave*, the selection for the Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize by the 2004 panel. In lines that are spare and strange, elegant and sorrowing, witty and linguistically innovative, *My Mojave* combines an Emersonian sweetness with postmodern practice. As part of a lyric experimental tradition, *My Mojave* is also balkily anti-lyric, interrupting its most flowing effects on purpose. Drawing on the terms of late Modernist enterprise (the kind despised by the poet in the first paragraph) to reinvent and re-use poetic form as an indicator of consciousness, Revell brings to us descriptions of the natural world, songlike fragments, declarations that resemble riddles and musings on poetry and the soul.

The other finalists for this prize—*Blue Hour* by Carolyn Forché, *The Blaze of the Poui* by Mark McMorris, *Otherhood* by Reginald Shepherd, and *Blindsight* by Rosmarie Waldrop—do these things as well. These brilliant books jostle conventions, inviting us to imagine the world more fully by reflecting the unfathomable variety of human experience in complex ways. Like Revell's work, they use diverse styles from many poetic traditions to make powerful reports about cultural, spiritual and linguistic dilemmas in which we find ourselves in a country that seems increasingly numb and unconscious.

At the heart of *My Mojave* there is an ethical proposition that it is possible to be simultaneously contemporary and radically innocent. In part, Revell does this with a layering of subject matter. Some of the poems address the dire happenings of the years 1999–2002, some reflect on personal daily life and some do both. Sometimes Revell uses metaphorical and actual displacement as a subject. The engaged thinker in these poems isn't quite sure how to go about this radical innocence but he knows it exists. Here is "Moving Day":

My bed abandoned
On a ranch road
Waits for anyone,
And they should hurry.
It's a good bed.
If the roads were level
I'd have it still.

Not half so lucky,
The teapot's in pieces
In a trash barrel.
It was white white
When I bought it
And I was new to poetry
Twenty years ago.

We're not home yet.
And I'm still new
To my callings:
Teacher, drunkard, absent minister.
I was in Carcassonne once.
I saw two horses there
And God who invented them.

Here, the poet asks for a calling; in the last stanza, it's possible to hear several tonal registers: the flat, almost homespun tone of "We're not home yet," the tentative irony of the next three lines and a tone that is earnest and solemn in the report of the meeting with God. To reside in a flexible sense both of tone and of home is part of the project of the innocent and aware poet. This is reflected in the titles of the book's two sections, "Here" and "There"—one word safely tucked into the other. "There" holds "here"; "here" is "there" with something added. Sounds, abstract and resonant, call between these varying senses of home and homelessness throughout the text. The "Mojave" of the title—with its "j" as a "ha" sound—is not only a place name but also the name of a native population in Western America, troubled by invaders. The book asks us to hold the questions of responsibility to place as part of its quest for a practical ethics.

Ethical concerns such as these are nothing new in Revell's work. This sort of tensile, unsentimental questioning can be found in earlier books as well. His style was not always so plain as it is now, but he has always juxtaposed investigations of inwardness and social-historical matters, trying to figure out existence from relationships among events. A scholar of Ashbery, Revell learned from that writer to offer a propitiatory paradox or a bemused riddle, and Ashbery's work—especially the uncanny mixes of diction, the playfulness of forms, the meditative freshness—has continued to feed him. *New Dark Ages* (1990)—perhaps a play on the title of Thoreau's ironic essay "Dark Ages"—is an intensely apocalyptic read; both *Erasures* (1992) and *Beautiful Shirt* (1994) are full of a posthistorical hauntedness that now seems common in work by younger poets.

More recently in *Arcady* and *There Are Three*, Revell began more directly to converse with Blake, Emerson, Thoreau and Dorothy Wordsworth; and now, in *My Mojave*, he continues this, as if he were amiably walking along beside them. The salient features of this writing are (1) a forceful but plain lexicon (a single word can become an echo chamber); (2) the use of spare, unadorned lines, often raggedly enjambed; and (3) frequent disjunctive shifts in levels

of diction, creating a tonal democracy that ranges from fierce to tender. The poems' forms are often familiar—stanzas of quatrains tend to be prevalent—but the broken quiet, declarative, often unpunctuated sentences are often quirky. The simplicity of style nods to a proto-lushness that might break forth in a psalm. We need such psalms. As this is being written, America is still stumbling through the mistaken empire-building in Iraq, supposedly for the sake of national security and in the name of Christian ideals.

Revell's baffled relationship to Christian belief is of the opposite kind. Standing outside a church, the observer in the poem notes:

Where boys throw stones today
And a sparkle rises to each stone
The river is among itself
Like some creature
With a pure empty power
To sleep sometimes even
As it moves or as it hunts.
("Church and State")

As the book works toward side-seams of a contemplative nature-poetry, it is woven of familiar cloth, fervently employing at least three formidable strands of American thought and poetic history—not just American Transcendentalist thought but also the William Carlos Williams/George Oppen strain of Modernism and postmodernist meditative styles. One might say it is, despite Revell's French roots, an all-American mix. Homages and lineages here can grow on the same tree. Here is "Mechanics," a piece "about" trees and forests in which these shifts and strands are evident:

What neighborhood? Only death and
trees, or one
Tree. Someone explained to me the
difference
East from West is the imagination
Of a single tree as against a forest.
Was he smiling? The Californians settle
Like gold ash upon their pine woods.
A stone's throw west of Melville's
tomb, my father's
Headstone tilts under one spruce kept
alive
By sprinklerheads and a Puerto Rican
gardener.
The gardener sings in the accent of his
ocean.
At Big Sur, there are too many sounds
to count one.
The forest is countless. A tree is almost
none.
This is the house that Jack built East to
West.

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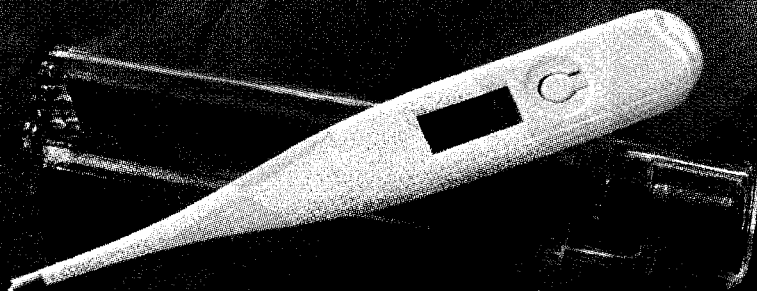
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He was smiling, and his teeth were
planted in rows.

A five-line core of five-stress lines—at times a spooky pentameter, at times a hexameter in a corset—of realist narrative, in which the speaker's father's grave is tended by a singing stranger, is banded on either side by slightly ironic musings about Manifest Destiny. Romantic ideas of home are undercut by the play on words: The forest is countless (too many trees to count them, too many times trying to count, without a count); the difference between east and west is explored but any false comparisons are dismissed. Whoever Jack is—there are many ur-Jacks—his smile presides over the last line like a fertility god. There are subthemes of nature gone awry, and being aligned with “too much energy,” perhaps a beast that is, as in Yeats, part of a cycle. In “New Year” Revell confronts the idea of impassioned wildness:

Disappearance equals increase, and
emptiness
Rises or falls according to no pattern

Because there isn't any pattern yet.
Etc. Etc. Bring out the mustangs now,
And memory, and terror. A birth
Yesterday so near, today seems far.

This work joins an intense conversation about nature and the spirit that has been going on for quite some time. Revell's New England candle, carried out West, has a wick of an antinomian Protestantism and the wax of much reading, including—but not limited to—the cheerfully skeptical, moody journals of Thoreau and the batty-genius notes of Dorothy Wordsworth. The candle burns strongly. The terms of Revell's investigations of nature are simultaneously democratic and secret and, like those of Pound and Eliot, recall the vegetation rituals in ancient Greece, asking What is nature? What are we? Where do we go within it? *My Mojave* has the feeling of an ancient text, a holy one; it bears reading, re-reading and re-re-reading.

Revell's dialectical relationship to a “nature tradition” can be seen as the first two poems set up these terms, opposing and complementing each other. The first, called “Arcady Again,” recalls pastorals, shepherds, simple fields of paradise; the second poem, called “Pandemonium,” is named after Milton's capital of hell. Among other images of childhood in this poem, Revell writes of a child in a tree who doesn't know he has already climbed it; the child is a Blakean figure for a prelapsarian radiance we don't know we have.

Re-reading “Arcady Again” with some fine close readers (a group investigating the use of “nature” in postmodern poetry), I was reminded of the way single words can carry the charge of whole ideas. Here is Revell's “Arcady Again” in its entirety:

Beside the house a path
Green leaves as low
As my eyes and a low
Gate into the rainy yard
Opens and even the little
Grass is very wide

God help the man who breathes
With nothing leading him
Here or someplace like it
Inside him which he opens
Wide enough to walk through
And walks through

Surprised to find deer and turtles
Living so near his house

The group of readers discussed how the three-stress line in this faux-sonnet plays away from and into regular rhythms, bringing a waltz-trinity of spiritual familiarity, and how the single word “help”—“God help the man who breathes”—is puzzling. Does “God help the man” mean the same as “God bless the man” or the same as “God help the damned”? “God help us” is sometimes uttered at the threshold of disaster. After the first stanza, we thought we were entering a poem of praise. The unpunctuated style of the poem allows for the syntactic indeterminacy that recommends a slightly effortful detachment, an activity that has a lot to do with the word “help.” If he had written “God bless the man who breathes” we would have been in the territory of Emerson. This sort of minute argument occurs elsewhere in the book. In the long poem titled “The Government of Heaven” he writes:

One and soon
Another hummingbird
Alights very near

They do not stir
In the branches anymore
For a long time

This is really the world
In June 2000
Ours and mine

The poet contemplates bird-nature in its unapproachable otherness, aware that he is recapping a romantic dilemma. The teetering, two-beat unadorned line—“One and soon”—is odd and just at the edge of sense; it sends a call into its sister line, “Ours and mine”—the same number of beats and almost the same number of letters—at the

end of the third stanza. And later: “Promises concealed/Are skin (this from Sir Walter Raleigh)/So full of rivers it carries sugar,” he writes in an unpunctuated stanza in this speculative, ode-like poem.

In thinking about Revell's ethics of innocence and attention, it is also helpful to recall Blake's vision of innocence, and before that, Thomas Traherne's, to whom Revell pays homage in a poem. Both Traherne and Blake write about childhood and the radical innocence necessary to live an ethical life. One must break with expectation. Blake writes: “I must Create a System or be enslaved by another man's.” Both Traherne and Blake ran barefoot all over the standard styles of their day, ignoring rules with a tossed-off-but-careful singing, using repetition, odd rhyme, incantatory measures, in part to bring us back to what our senses purely provide if, in Blake's words, the “doors of perception” are open. Traherne and Blake, though critics of the way most people live in a shabby overlay, believe in the possibilities of leading a visionary life, despite the oppression of society's rules and government's laws. Revell ends his poem “For Thomas Traherne” with a reference to chthonic light:

A sight above all festivals or praise
Is earth everywhere
And all things here
Becoming younger
Facing change
In the dark weather now like winter
Candling underground as rain

Revell's brand of American Transcendentalism embodies more of the skeptical side of the Romantic tradition—perhaps the branch received from Schiller and German Idealism. The American skeptical romantic, Thoreau, is often the main muse, and Thoreau is a very odd duck; Perry Miller, in *The American Transcendentalist*, quotes Thoreau's journal from 1851: “The traveler's whole employment is to calculate what cloud will obscure the moon and what she will triumph over.” This brand of idealism has a lining of unsolvable sorrow. Everything is both here and not. Revell acknowledges the eccentricity of living a life that is infused with Swedenborgian signs but regulated by habits of practical self-reliance. Like a candle carried underground, this life encompasses chthonic and shimmering states.

Finally, here is the title poem, an erotic, formally engaging, psalmlike piece addressing things that happen on the ground. It tears apart its first phrase while allowing

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the first stanza mostly to increase. In subsequent stanzas, it meditates on awareness. Finally, the narrative of the insect wings, a kind of allegorical, personal tale, gives way to a prayer and its codicil. The poem reflects on heaven and on earthly revelations:

Sha-
Dow,
As of
A meteor
At mid-
Day: it goes
From there.

A perfect circle falls
Onto white imperfections.
(Consider the black road,
How it seems white the entire
Length of a sunshine day.)

Or I could say
Shadows and mirage
Compensate the world,
Completing its changes
with no change.

In the morning after a storm,

We used brooms. Out front,
There was broken glass to collect.
In the backyard, the sand
Was covered with transparent wings.
The insects could not use them in the
wind
And so abandoned them. Why
hadn't the wings scattered? Why
did they lie so stilly where they'd
dropped?
It can only be the wind passed through
them.

Jealous lover,
Your desire
Passes the same way.

And jealous earth,
There is a shadow you cannot keep
To yourself alone.
At midday,
My soul wants only to go
The black road which is the white road.
I'm not needed
Like wings in a storm
And God is the storm.

Essay by BRENDA HILLMAN

FILMS

Dark Habits

STUART KLAWANS

BAD EDUCATION • THE INCREDIBLES

As times change, so do the questions that a movie prompts. Had I seen Pedro Almodóvar's *Bad Education* in another season, I might have begun this review by asking about the new possibilities the movie finds in the old devices of film noir: the heartsick voiceover, the dark and secretive settings, the love object in the blond wig. Or, dazzled by the narrative structure, I might first have looked into Almodóvar's use of frames within frames: for example, the flashback envisioned by a man who is a character in another character's screenplay. The film's emphasis on reading deserves investigation—for the first half of *Bad Education*, people do almost nothing, on a literal level, except pore over texts—and so does the personality of the lead actor, Gael García Bernal, who is much more convincing here than as Che Guevara in *The Motorcycle Diaries*. (Why so? Because, unlike Che, his present character is supposed to put you in mind of Julia Roberts.)

I'd like to ponder all these matters. But I saw *Bad Education* in the last weeks of the election campaign, when the United

States plunged further into the condition of a church-based autocracy; and so two questions about *Bad Education* obsess me above all others. Can Almodóvar be considered a political filmmaker? If so, what difference does it make?

Certainly his career has benefited from, and reflected, a great political change. Almodóvar made his first, short films in 1974–79, as Franco's church-based autocracy crumbled and fresh air came rushing into Spain. His first features, made in the early 1980s, breathed a druggie, anti-clerical, polysexual atmosphere, which seemed designed (as J. Hoberman wrote) to give a heart attack to any senior Phalangist who strayed into the movie house. But if you think this information pins down Almodóvar's politics, you have temporarily

forgotten the possible coincidence of queer fun and political reaction. (Witness *Interview* magazine in that same period, with its celebration of the world's most fabulous fascists.) Also, you might recall that Almodóvar's characters almost never discuss public events or try to influence them. Except for a single scene, involving a street demonstration—an action carried out by frustrated medical workers—politics as such have scarcely entered his films.

So why do I keep wondering if *Bad Education* has a political nature?

No definite answer springs from the plot, or the fraction of it that I can reveal in good conscience. Enrique, a young filmmaker (Fele Martínez), is working in his deeply shadowed office one day in 1980, casting about for a story to tell, when an unexpected visitor drops by and announces himself as Ignacio, an old friend from boarding school (García Bernal). "My first love," says the wonderstruck filmmaker. The reunion falters slightly at first, then becomes more deeply awkward once the visitor explains that he is now a professional actor, who is available for work and also happens to have with him an original screenplay. Unable to beg off, Enrique agrees to read the script and soon discovers that it evokes his youth, when the two boys fell in love at a provincial Catholic school and were harshly separated by Father Manolo (Daniel Giménez-Cacho), a literature teacher with a tormented, hands-on infatuation with Ignacio.

That's a lot of domination for one movie—and we're still in the setup. Father Manolo, in the "true story" flashback, wields unjust authority over the boys; Ignacio, in the screenplay, returns to the school years later (as a blond drag artiste) to exert a dubious power of his own, by blackmailing the priest; and Enrique, in the present-day story, makes full use of his right to film the script or reject it, to hire the would-be actor or dismiss him. I suppose these contests could be called political, especially given the role in them of a large and forceful institution. (As Lenny Bruce used to say, it's the only *the Church*.) But as the film unfolds, its power relationships turn out to be unstable and are played out within an invariably intimate domain. The struggles enter the public arena only to the extent that they supply material for a film—and then it's an intensely personal movie, since Enrique not only puts his own story on screen but also serves as the unmistakable double of Pedro Almodóvar.

Once again, possible political meanings slip away; and yet, because of the film's chronology, they never disappear complete-

ly. The elaborate narrative scrambling in *Bad Education* forces you to notice that it's 1964 when the boys fall in love and are torn apart, in the depths of the dictatorship. When Ignacio returns as a blackmailing drag queen, it's 1977, when so much that had been repressed in Spain came bursting forth. Enrique decides to shoot Ignacio's script in 1980, when Almodóvar released his first feature. As I reflect on this time scheme, and on the facts that ultimately do not come out in Enrique's production, I am reminded of an eloquent passage in a recent article by Colm Tóibín, about the mood in Spain immediately after the dictatorship:

History resided then in locked memories, half-told stories, unread archives. In some families the silence was complete; the children, as they grew up in the bright new democracy, simply did not know what their parents had done in the war. Many people born in the 1950s and 1960s have unfond memories of their father growing grumpier and more silent as the war was mentioned, or having one story, which seemed to mask other more dangerous stories, told over and over, until it came to resemble a bad alibi.

A bad alibi: When Almodóvar's early features came out, they too contained a silence beneath their insistent, hectic transgressions—a silence about the nature of the society that had given birth to the filmmaker, back in the 1950s, and had nurtured him to adulthood. To Almodóvar's fans, there was nothing significant about this omission. The mere existence of his movies was said to be revelatory enough; and faced with Almodóvar's extravagant talent, many of us who sensed something hollow in the fun were willing to put aside our doubts.

To Almodóvar's immense credit, though, he did not stop doubting. Starting about ten years ago (around the same time that he began to write *Bad Education*), he transformed his work, shifting its mode from travesty to melodrama and imbuing it with a new emotional maturity. Now, in *Bad Education*, he retraces his career to its beginning and, through the figure of Enrique, imputes to himself a guilty secret—not the worst secret that the characters bear, but creepy enough. Within the confessional setting of this film noir (so appropriate to the story's ecclesiastical background), Almodóvar owns up to having founded his work on dishonesty, manipulation and misdirection.

Perhaps you will interpret these sins as entirely personal. Maybe, going further, you will also see them as the source of artistic

failings. (At the end of *Bad Education*, Enrique sets out to create films with "PASSION"—the word fills the screen—leaving us to wonder what truths might be obscured by those giant capital letters.) Or, thinking of the silences in post-Franco Spain, you might sense that the confession has wider implications. Surely it's significant, in a movie that's so concerned with reading, that when Enrique scans the newspapers for story ideas, he never bothers with the front page but prefers to sift through the disasters and oddities in the column-fillers. Like all but the most scandalous and doomed of the characters, he's engaged in a strategy of avoidance—until the story of *Bad Education* breaks in on him.

So yes, Almodóvar may now be considered a political filmmaker. He is concerned here with the aftermath of the Franco period, rather than the religious dictatorship itself, and he focuses his attention narrowly, not on civic life but on the troubled personal responses of individuals. But, that said, he has now touched on the political context as never before, and in so doing has retrospectively deepened his entire body of work.

Does it make a difference?

As the shadows fall over my half of the population—the half that is taunted as "elite" while being utterly disempowered—I think that *Bad Education* may have something to tell us about living through the next years. Not that Almodóvar offers any advice. What he tells us becomes intelligible only on the actors' faces: the look of fear as two boys try to hide in a darkened bathroom; the visible anguish of a culpable priest praying for mercy; the contortions of self-righteousness and self-disgust that play across Enrique's features; and most fascinating of all, most unreliable, the multiple faces worn by García Bernal as victim, villain, ingénue and opportunist.

This is Almodóvar's version of political expression. Look: These are now our moral possibilities.

The faces and bodies of the Parr family are expressive, too—wildly so, since they belong to cartoon characters—but may perhaps be enjoyed best when you don't think about their politics.

The pleasure comes just from seeing them work. As created by writer-director Brad Bird (*The Iron Giant*) and realized by the animators at Pixar, the Parrs are the magically crafted central figures of *The Incredibles*: Mom, Dad and three kids living in a modest 1960s Moderne house in the suburbs and trying not to let on that they possess superpowers. In the old days, in the big city, father Bob was famous as the

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heroic Mr. Incredible, and mother Helen was almost equally celebrated as the crime-fighting Elastigirl. Now, as it happens, they have to conceal their abilities, as do their children—until duty calls, as it must.

“Whiz,” “bang” and “gee” are the words that first come to mind, as the stretch-suited Parrs zoom off for battle on an island fortress that could have belonged to a nemesis of James Bond, had any of them hired designers half as clever. The settings in *The Incredibles* are endlessly inventive, the action exuberant, the laughter frequent and the characters a bottomless toy box of delights. Students of animation history have been suggesting that Bird and Pixar have developed the first truly engaging human cartoon characters. I cannot comment on the technical side of 3D computer animation; but, setting aside my longstanding affection for Elmer Fudd, I will agree that cartoon people have rarely been so much fun.

The reason, according to Bird, is that the Parrs’ strange talents are rooted in normal family traits. Fathers are supposed to be strong, so Bob can bench-press a freight engine. Mothers are always being pulled ten ways at once, so Helen is elastic. Young Violet can become invisible, as teenage girls sometimes want to do, and Dash is just a wonderfully energetic little boy, ratcheted up to 200 mph.

Bird’s biggest achievement in *The Incredibles* is to have inflated family stereotypes to parade-balloon size. His failing is that, in so doing, he also confirmed these stereotypes, and worse. Helen mouths one or two semi-feminist wisecracks but readily gives up her career for a house and kids; women are like that. Bob’s buddy Frozone, the main nonwhite character in the movie, can instantly create ice; black people are cool. The superheroes are in hiding because greedy trial lawyers sued them into retirement; and, while concealed, they chafe at their confinement, like Ayn Rand railing against enforced mediocrity.

The family is the foundation of our society. Freedom is on the march.

Light in the Darkness: I join with all cinephiles in welcoming the Museum of Modern Art’s Department of Film and Video back to its renovated home on New York’s West 53rd Street. A world innovator when it was founded in 1935, the department continues to lead the way with an inaugural, seventy-five-work series titled “Premieres.” It opens to the public on November 21 with the world premiere of Jean-Luc Godard’s *Moments choisis des Histoire(s) du cinéma*. Information: www.moma.org. ■

EXCHANGE

(Continued From Page 20)

historical reasons Arabs and Iranians might have legitimate cause to be deeply mistrustful of America’s (and Britain’s) real intentions and motives; and why they might insist instead that if America wishes to show good will toward Iranian, Syrian and other peoples, the first step should be not to preach democracy but to show regard for their national interests.

In the long run, I am at one with Tomasky and McFaul in hoping that such development will lead to the establishment of stable and prosperous democracies. But I have seen far too much of sham democracy in South Asia and the former Soviet Union to have much faith that the outward forms of democracy in impoverished societies with authoritarian traditions can secure human progress or even basic human rights. This is especially true when these forms are brought in quickly from outside and not produced by a long process of indigenous political, social, economic and cultural evolution. But let me make it clear: I sympathize with McFaul’s and Tomasky’s ultimate goals, and I honor their intentions, if not their methods or their rhetoric.

If my tone concerning their work was excessively harsh, this stemmed from my horror at the failure of the Democratic Party to oppose the Iraq war and also at the way this reflected a deeper and extremely dangerous failure to remember the searing lessons of how America became involved in Vietnam, as taught at the time both by the disasters in that country and by great American intellectual figures like C. Vann Woodward (whose views I cited), Senator Fulbright and so many others.

This deeper failure, which I examine at length in my book *America Right or Wrong: An Anatomy of American Nationalism*, is closely related to an inability to re-examine certain fundamental national myths, including that of national liberal messianism. To say this is not the standpoint of an arrogant foreigner. It stands in a great tradition of critical American thought, which should be revived as a matter of profound intellectual and indeed patriotic urgency. If the lessons of Iraq are not to be forgotten as the lessons of Vietnam have too often been, it is essential that American intellectuals, and the Democratic Party, take a long, cool look at these myths and not contribute to perpetuating them.

Finally, I should indeed like to say that the *The Fight Is for Democracy*, edited by George Packer, is a valuable collection that contains not only the essays I have criticized but also some excellent ones, with which I am in agreement (for example those by Jeff Madrick and Susie Linfield). I did not mention these for lack of space and because they are not directly germane to the subjects I wished to discuss. I congratulate Packer on this book as a whole and regret that I was compelled to disagree so strongly with some of its authors.

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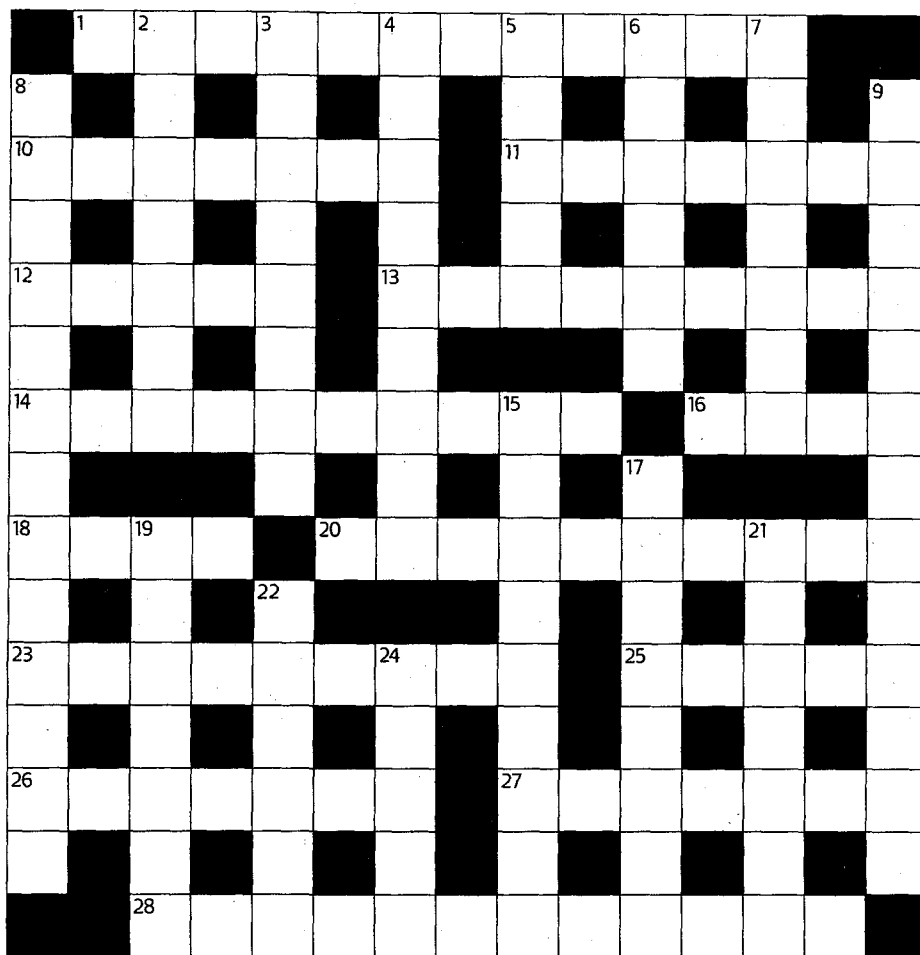
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ACROSS

- 1 Only hurt the lions, but didn't kill them—so the self-proclaimed marksman suffered it. (7,5)
- 10 What the villain does to the heroine, on command. (7)
- 11 Possibly retains what might be a bit more dirty. (7)
- 12 Bits of verse, but Mab is upset by such. (5)
- 13 Supposedly clever plots hatched by "crackers" otherwise. (9)
- 14 Study an important subject at school, as you might be untroubled when you have it clear. (10)
- 16 What the employer did with the dues collected. (4)
- 18 So-called because they are not private houses. (4)
- 20 Gives more power to the control on armed strength. (10)
- 23 Able to sort of use fish, as well as this for tea, if you like it sweet. (4,5)
- 25 A well-known illustrator of the past who made Old Glory grand. (5)
- 26 Those who butter up to a wrong side. (7)
- 27 You can get the train here, but the entire sort is about you, as one hears. (7)
- 28 Not fully appearing in what a 9 puts out, and as a finale he's confused by a tab that shows the price, to a point. (2,10)

DOWN

- 2 and 19 A book about slavery by Maugham? (2,5,7)
- 3 Paragon—not a thing like this! (8)
- 4 Old-fashioned before getting around the wheels that get turned at some other place. (9)
- 5 Longs to see such trees. with a sticker having two points. (5)
- 6 It may run down the leg, being the main sort enclosing a couple of directions. (6)



- 7 People who flee their native land seem confused about the rig, which needs repairing. (7)
- 8 Content to be measured by it? (5,8)
- 9 One's work is bound to be habit-forming! (5,8)
- 15 With clusters of colored flowers, possibly makes a nice beginning with a vocal rendition right in the middle. (9)
- 17 A couple may not mind having this thrown at them. (8)
- 19 See 2
- 21 Sometimes surfed by the impatient viewer. (7)
- 22 Saw what the clairvoyant claims—to die perhaps—is deep, possibly. (6)
- 24 What the car may need, with a few added words causing explosions of air. (5)

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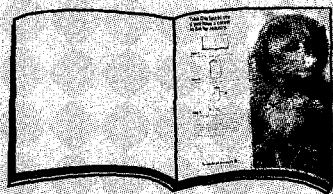
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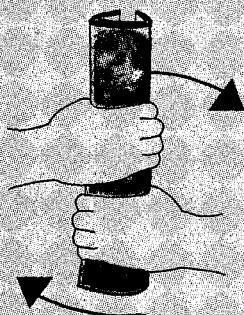
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Roll magazine, starting with left page.



Step 2.

Tighten until you have mink by the throat.



Step 3.

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.....

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